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Social Trends and Major Social Development Problems in Africa

I. Overview

1. Africa is currently facing an economic and social crisis of unprecedented proportions. Not only has almost every major indicator of the economic and social well-being registered a highly disturbing and/or declining trend but also the situation has reached such an extent that in 1984 alone over a million people have lost their lives because of starvation and hunger and famine are threatening hundreds of million of people all over the continent. The seriousness of the situation could perhaps be further reflected by mentioning that Africa's social and economic crisis has dominated the discussions in the last Conference of Ministers of ECA, at the last summer session of the Economic and Social Council, at the 39th Session of the General Assembly and at the 20th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity. 1/

2. Although the crisis has existed since the early 1970s, due to the cummulative impact of a number of external and internal factors, the crisis has rapidly escalated since the early 1980s as a result of the widespread, severe and persistent drought; the extremely unfavourable global economic environment; and the dramatic increases in Africa's external debt, interest rates and debt servicing costs.

3. The crisis has dealt a serious blow to the African economies. Gross output of developing Africa declined by 0.1 percent in 1983 and only a marginal growth of 1.8 percent is projected for 1984. The terms of trade of African countries declined by more than 50 percent between 1977 and 1981. African countries have also experienced a serious collapse in commodity prices. African countries exporting coffee, copper, cocoa, bananas, vegetable oil and tea have suffered losses in foreign exchange earnings equivalent to $2.2 billion during 1979-1981. The debt situation of African countries has reached a crisis level. As a proportion of the value of exports, Africa's external debt is estimated at 180 percent in 1983 as compared to 138 percent by the end of 1981. The ratio of debt service to export earnings of African countries amounted to 22.4 percent in 1983 compared with 10.7 percent in 1980.

4. Despite some modest gains in the quality of life in Africa over the past two decades, social development indicators and social conditions are still far from acceptable and have shown a tendency towards deterioration in recent years. As a result of the stagnation and/or decline in the rates of growth of output and the rapid rates of population growth, per capita income has constantly declined since 1980 at an average annual rate of 4.1 percent. In fact average per capita income in many African countries is, in real terms, less than what it was 15 years ago. Hidden within these low per capita income figures is a highly skewed pattern of income distribution. About 70 percent of the total African population is now destitute (seriously below the poverty line) or is on the verge of poverty. About one half of the African labour force is unemployed

or underemployed. The availability of water still remains a critical problem. Only one in four Africans has access to safe drinking water. Large scale rural-urban migration and movements of refugees and displaced persons to the urban centres have created intolerable living conditions in urban areas. The African population estimated in 1983 to be living in slum and squatter settlements is between 50 to 60 percent. Child mortality in sub-Saharan Africa was 50 percent higher than the average of developing countries in the 1950s. Now, it is almost double the average. Social unrest and instability, and the rates of crime and juvenile delinquency have been on the rise.

5. Despite the fact that impressive quantitative gains have been made in the field of education and also significant progress has been made in the field of health during the past two decades, health and education still remain as two major problem areas. Health facilities are grossly inadequate and unevenly distributed in favour of urban areas. The larger part of the rural population has only limited access to health care. The orientation of education and the trained manpower mix, on the other hand, have failed to appropriately respond to Africa's development at needs and aspirations.

6. The aforementioned critical economic and social situation has been further aggravated by the persistent and widespread drought which has brought about the worst human, social and economic disaster in the recent history of Africa. The drought, which in the early 1970s was localized, in a few countries in the Sudano-Sahelian region, has now spread to 36 countries thus affecting coastal and other areas in eastern, central, western and southern Africa that have, hitherto, been unaffected by it. 2/

7. The prolonged drought has led to a serious food scarcity which further aggravated an already unfavourable food situation. The food situation has deteriorated so drastically that in 34 drought-stricken countries the imports of cereals have increased from about 4 million metric tons in 1970 to over 23 million metric tons in 1982. 27 of those countries were declared as abnormally food-aid dependent countries. Food aid requirements for 1983/1984 were estimated to exceed 3.3 million tons after taking into account normal commercial imports.

8. Furthermore, the drought has triggered off critical famine, malnutrition, loss of human lives, sharp depletion of livestock, water shortages, energy shortages and severe dislocations of the normal social life and patterns.

9. As many as 35 million people are currently in desperate need of help, and in all some 150 million people are today on the verge of hunger in Africa. Over a million people are known to have already died from hunger. More tragic is the fact that a significant proportion, between 20 to 30 percent of the people affected by the drought, are children in the extremely vulnerable under-five years of age group.

10. The drought has also aggravated the movement of persons in search of survival. This has included groups that have been looking for water and pastures for their herds - comprising entire communities within countries; groups moving from the

rural to urban centres in search of job opportunities, and groups that have crossed national borders and have been living, in some occasions, in refugee-like circumstances. Such movement has created, in many cases, harsh economic burdens and a host of undesirable social and political consequences.

11. As a result of the deteriorating economic conditions, the social development sector has had to suffer. Governments have had to make severe cuts in social services and programmes which meant further setbacks to living standards and accentuation of the widespread impoverishment.

12. Some governments have had to impose severe restrictions on the employment of foreigners, and to restrict immigration in an effort to conserve jobs for their citizens. These restrictions on the free movement of Africans across national frontiers, though understandable, do not help the mood and the will for inter-African co-operation. The economic hardships, as a whole, have aggravated poverty in many countries and have also fomented instability.

13. To deal effectively with the multidimensional aspects of the crisis makes it necessary not only to respond at once to those conditions which pose an immediate threat to human life, but also redress conditions which gave rise to the current crisis and to establish a sound basis for the resumption and acceleration of economic and social development.

14. The efforts of African countries and the international community have concentrated, during the past few years, on the emergency situation; strengthening preparedness to cope with any emergency in the future, and laying the foundation for rehabilitation, reconstruction and revitalization of the African economies and the resettlement of the displaced population. 3/

15. Any long-term solution to Africa's socio-economic plight and the transformation of Africa from its present dependent situation to a fully self-sustained economic community cannot be achieved without attacking the root cause of the problem, hence the need for the faithful implementation of the structural measures and strategies amply elaborated in the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos which call, *inter alia*, for an internalization of the development process; an effective and productive interaction of all factors of development; an efficient and co-ordinated exploitation and management of Africa's vast human, mineral, agricultural and energy resources; the foundation of individual and collective self-reliance and self-sustainments and the strengthening of sub-regional and regional co-operation. 4/

16. Africa is a continent of great economic potential in terms of its natural and human resources. What is needed is the total political commitment and resolve to initiate the necessary change to harness those resources for the maximum well-being of the African people. Unless this is done the future of Africa will be very gloomy indeed. A study, recently published by ECA, entitled *ECA and Africa's Development 1983-2008: A Preliminary Perspective Study* has shown that a continuation of the current historical trends - without major conscious changes in the patterns of production, distribution and lifestyles as enunciated

in the Lagos Plan of Action - will only lead, by the beginning of the next century, to a "nightmare" of total economic collapse, social injustice, human misery and political instability and chaos. 5/ Such an outcome must be averted and a new future of hope, prosperity and dignity must consciously be built in Africa.

II. The Demographic Base and Population Policies

17. Africa's population has continued to grow rapidly over the past two decades and the rate of growth, already the highest of any region in the world, is likely to accelerate for some years if present trends continue. The annual rate of increase for the period 1980-85 is estimated at 3.1%. For Western and Eastern Africa a rise of 3.3% per annum is expected by 1985-90.

18. The population of the 50 independent countries associated with the Economic Commission for Africa was estimated in 1982 at 434 million in 1980. The figure is expected to reach 506 million by 1985, 586 million by 1990 and 790 million by the year 2000 6/ In 1980, about 25% of this population was in Northern Africa, 32.9% in Western Africa, 30.9% in Eastern Africa,10.6% in Middle Africa and only about 0.6% in Southern Africa.

19. The size of the population as a whole considered in relation to the land mass may not seem to pose any problems. The region is still the least densely populated with about 16 persons per square kilometer. But a crude man-land ratio can be misleading if taken at its face value. For a continent that is still predominantly dependent on agriculture and a sizeable proportion of people still practise subsistence farming, the critical factor is how much arable land is suitable and available for farming and habitation.

20. Alternatively, one must examine how much land is available to the rural population per capita. Many areas, such as deserts, swamps, sandy patches, are unsuitable for habitation. Although it is theoretically possible to "make the desert bloom", this is not a feasible proposition for countries at a low technological level and with low GDP. This in considering the pressure of population on land, what needs to be taken into account is the "critical density", i.e. the number of persons per square kilometer of arable land.

21. The figures on Table 1 7/ show that there were 204 persons per square kilometer of arable land in 1975 and 299 in 1981. This compares favourably with the world average of 280 and 329 for 1975 and 1981 respectively. But, arable land is used for non-agricultural purposes as well, so that the pressure on land may be greater than it appears. The rise in numbers from 204 to 299 per square kilometer in six years is an indicator of how fast the arable areas are becoming overcrowded.

Table 1

Major Areas/Regions	Persons per Km^2				Rural population per Km^2 of arable land	
	Total area		Arable land			
	1975	1981	1975	1981	1975	1981
World Total	29	34	280	329	170	192
Africa	13	16	204	299	154	215
America - North	11	13	94	107	22	24
America - Latin	16	18	284	260	112	88
Asia	83	95	500	613	367	435
Europe	96	100	370	384	122	111
Oceania	3	3	45	53	13	13
U S S R	11	12	112	118	44	43
SELECTED AFRICAN COUNTRIES						
Algeria	7	8	260	284	130	108
Egypt	37	42	1364	1570	713	862
Morocco	39	47	241	264	149	156
Ghana	41	51	960	1111	635	702
Liberia	15	17	1221	1522	1035	1072
Mauritania	1	2	132	821	117	507
Nigeria	68	85	276	281	226	226
Zaire	11	12	342	502	252	299
Kenya	23	29	848	929	752	799
Ethiopia	23	27	215	254	190	207
Zambia	7	8	100	113	63	71

22. Within the region, as the list of selected countries indicates there are wide variations in crude and critical densities and the pressure on arable land, for example, in countries like Algeria and Zambia with critical densities of 284 and 113 appears to be far less than is the case in Egypt, Ghana, Liberia or Kenya with critical densities of 1570, 1111, 1522, 929 respectively.

23. If the present growth rates of the respective populations of these countries are maintained, the ratio of arable land to man will be halved within the next 18 to 24 years. The implications of this will be taken up under the section on Agriculture and Food Production.

24. The age structure of the African population has shown little change over the past decade. Because of the high rate of natural increase (2.9% per annum) the population is predominantly young with the proportion of young persons under 15 years around 44% of the total population. The dependency ratio, (that is, the proportion of persons below age 15 years plus proportion above 65 years divided by proportion between 15 and 64 years) is a measure of the burden of the dependent population on the working population. In Africa this is rather high, over 92%, compared to North America and Europe for example, where the respective ratios are 51.5% and 56%. Looked at in another way it means that in Africa working adults have a larger number of dependent children to look after. The implications of the high dependency ratio in Africa, and other developing countries for that matter, with respect to such services as education, health, housing and employment will be taken up later. In general, a high dependency ratio means that resources are seriously strained, and the capacity to save and invest in more direct productive activities like agriculture and industry is seriously hampered. These three facts - the fastly diminishing ratio of arable land per person, the predominantly youthful population, and the rapid population growth which will lead to a doubling of the population in most of the 50 ECA member countries in 18 to 24 years - should be taken seriously by all development planners in Africa. In the critical sectors of education, health, housing, employment, food production, water supply, and energy, what concrete provisions are being made to cope with double the present population within this short time span? Governments of ECA member states are called upon to seriously consider integrating population variables into development planning. Unless this is done the social situation that will face African governments in the foreseeable future will be grim indeed.

25. A rapid rate of population increase (apart from mass migration and refugee influxes) is the result of high fertility and declining mortality. High fertility resulting from frequent births affects the health of both mothers and children. Consequently, the health services and facilities become strained by the increased demand for medical and health services. Inadequate health and medical care results in high mortality. The effect of high mortality is that it leads to higher fertility since mothers want to have more children in the hope that at least some would survive. Eventually, this develops into a vicious cycle which can only be broken by sustained improvement in children's chances of survival. Extreme poverty is also associated with high fertility since children become the only reliable source of future social security of the poor. Thus poverty tends to compound poverty. A way has to be found to break the vicious cycle as well.

26. Below are the estimates (Table 2) for the crude birth and death rates for the 1980-85 quinquennium. The crude birth rate is 46 per 1000 population for all the ECA member countries, and the crude death rate is 16.5 per 1000. Infant mortality is estimated at 115 per thousand. In some countries it may be as high as 200 per thousand. Child mortality rates are more difficult to estimate because of problems of data collection and estimations of ages, but some 18-25% of children die before age five in some countries like Sierra Leone, Benin, Gambia, Guinea, Chad, Mali, Malawi, Ethiopia, Niger, Burkina Faso, Liberia, Angola, Central African Republic. 8/ Life expectancy is 48 for males and 51 for females. These figures represent a big improvement in recent years. But even then the implications of these figures are sad. Life expectancy in the developed countries is over 72 years.

The loss to Africa in man-years, in investment, and human resources on one hand and in human suffering and unfulfilled hopes and expectations on the other must be staggering. It is a challenge to the welfare and development agencies of Africa to reduce this huge gap in life expectancy and its consequences.

Table 2 : Crude birth and death rates, rates of annual increase and life expectancy for 1980-85. 9/

Area/region	Crude birth rate 0/000 1981	Crude death rate 0/000 1981	Population growth rate % - 1980-85	Life expectancy in years 1980-85		Infant mortality 0/000 - 1981
				M	F	
Africa	46	16.5	3.1	48.2	51.3	115
Northern Africa	42	12.9	2.9	54.8	57.0	108
Western Africa	49	18.5	3.0	45.2	48.5	123
Middle Africa	45	17.9	2.7	45.9	49.2	120
Eastern Africa	49	17.0	3.2	47.2	50.5	114
Southern Africa	46	15.4	2.8	48.6	53.0	104

27. There is some evidence to support the view that education plays a great role in reducing infant and child mortality. The child mortality rate has been found to be significantly higher where the mothers were uneducated. On the other hand, the urban factor did not seem to be significant where the mother's educational levels were comparable.10 Socio-economic factors also affect mortality levles. These facts, among others, simply illustrate the point that development and well-being are indivisible, each sectoral improvement is likely to reinforce or enhance improvement in other sectors.

28. Africa with 30 per cent of its population living in urban areas is the least urbanised of the world's continents. At the same time it has the highest rate of urban growth noticeable since the days of independence over the past two decades or so. The rate of urbanization has risen from 4.4 per cent in the 1950's to 5.1 per cent during the years 1980-85. Between the sub-regions of the continent, the rates vary considerably. Southern Africa's annual urban growth rate of 7.2 per cent is much larger compared to 4.5 per cent for north Africa during the same period 1980-85, while the regions of East, West and Central/middle Africa have urban growth rate of 6.6, 5.7 and 5.4 per cent respectively.

29. There are also wide variations in the level of urbanization. Countries in Northern Africa have over 44 per cent of their populations living in urban areas. The corresponding figures are 16 per cent for Eastern Africa and 23 per cent for West Africa, 34 per cent for Central/Middle Africa and 13 per cent for Southern Africa. 11/ The least urbanised areas appear to have the highest rate of urban

growth. The towns which have achieved the greatest growth appear to be those with populations of 100,000 or more, especially the national and provincial capitals. For example Dar-es-Salaam grew at 16.4 per cent during the period 1960-80.

30. These phenomenal growth rates are sometimes due to the incorporation of adjoining villages or suburbs into the main urban centres as they expand. There are, of course, pull and push factors behind these urban growth trends. Development in most countries have to be urban centred and this tends to accelerate rural-urban migration. In some cases rural deprivation caused by pressure on land, low rural wages, rural underemployment, and lack of amenities, has acted as a push factor. Much has been said about reversing or halting the rising rural-urban migration because of the aggravation of urban problems - the strain on urban facilities and services like housing, water resources sanitation, energy, etc. and the growing spectre of urban unemployment. However, it should be noted that three-fifth of total urban growth is attributable to natural population increase.

31. What is needed to reverse these trends are far-reaching changes in development and resource allocation policies. The built-in urban bias in existing structures and policies ensure that progress, success and power all lead people to the big city. Slowing down the rate of urbanization cannot be taken in isolation from the development of the rural areas where over 70% of the people live.

32. It is recognised that the people of any country are its best resource. Development is neither possible nor meaningful without the full involvement of the people both as participants in production of goods and services and as beneficiaries of the fruits of development. But the failure or stagnation of development programmes threatens the future hopes of many of the people to climb out of the pit of poverty and privation.

33. The relationship between population and development is an accepted fact. But the necessary balance to be maintained between population growth and development is difficult to determine. It is a matter for political decision. What is evident however is that rapid population growth may undermine the best efforts of development. Programmes for expanding and improving education, health, sanitation, housing, water supply, food production, may slow down considerably and targets will be missed if a fast growing population compels a diversion of resources from development to merely sustain an ever young and rapidly growing population.

34. More and more African Governments are beginning to take a deliberate look at the role of the population, its structure and growth rate in their actual responses in terms of overt policies, have sometimes been muted. There are six countries (Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Guinea, Ivory Coast and the Libya) which have declared pro-natalist policies. For these countries, the desire for a larger population is premised on the advantages of a large labour force for economic expansion, a large consumer market to stimulate productivity and manpower for defense and political clout.

35. There are nineteen countries who would like to lower their population growth rate because they see this as likely to create economic problems - rising unemployment, escalating demands for maternal and child care, schooling, housing, and other social services. They see a fast growing population as impeding savings, lowering investment levels, and consuming their natural resources at an exorbitant rate.

36. Another 26 countries are more or less satisfied with their current population size and population growth rates. However there are signs that some of these countries are beginning to shift their position in favour of a more moderate growth rate.

37. Government interventions in the population sector have taken many forms. Some governments like Kenya, Ghana and Egypt have clearly articulated policies and national programmes both governmental and private to promote family planning education and service delivery aimed at reducing fertility and improving maternal and child health. They see family planning as a component of general welfare and development and actively encourage the integration of family planning services into existing programmes of maternal and child health, public health and other social services.

38. In these countries with anti-natalist policies family planning is being increasingly recognised as a major instrument for welfare and development. At the micro level, family planning must be seen as a human rights provision to enable couples and individuals to determine their own fertility. It is their right to have up-to-date information on human reproduction and the advantages and disadvantages of the different methods of contraception and fertility control. To be able to exercise that right they must have access to a range of facilities, so that irrespective of religion, culture, beliefs or personal choices, people should be able to take not only the right decisions that suit them but also be able to carry them out. For mothers especially, the spacing of their children, irrespective of desired family size, is a desirable measure for their own health and wellbeing as well as for their children.

39. Many governments who do not necessarily promote or support anti-natalist policies, give tacit or overt acceptance to family planning as a health and welfare measure. On the whole the actual quantum of financial commitment to family planning in Africa is very low.

40. A Parliamentary Conference on Population and Development in Africa, was held in Nairobi from July 6-7, 1981. This conference, the first such meeting of African Parliamentarians, affirmed the rights of couples and individuals to have access to information and the means to practise responsible parenthood. It went on to urge those governments which had not yet recognised family planning to do so.

41. An aspect of population issues which tends to have a low profile is migration, both internal and external. The decision to move residence from one area or country to another may be taken by individuals or groups under a wide range of circumstances. Some circumstances may be traumatic and caused by circumstances

such as floods, droughts, wars, or political persecution. Unemployment and economic hardship have been perennial causes of many traditional migrations.

42. The rural-urban exodus is a well-known variant, briefly mentioned earlier. It is linked with several factors affecting rural living conditions. Persisting drought, creeping dessertification, inadequate farm land allocation, low rural wages, poor farm prices, poor rural facilities for health, education, and entertainment have been responsible for driving many young people away from the rural areas. One of the factors that has affected agricultural production in Ghana, for example, is the fact that many young people are unwilling to work on farms. A study carried out on the cocoa industry in the 1960's showed that even then the average age of the cocoa farmer was in the mid fifties, and warned of the consequences. 12/ The Lagos Plan of Action took notice of such problems in stating "For an effective agricultural revolution in Africa, it is essential to involve the youth and to arrest the rural-urban drift. Policies have to emphasize consistently the need not only to improve the living conditions on the farms but also to increase farm real incomes as a means of making agriculture more attractive and remunerative". 13/

43. International migrations are no new phenomena in Africa. In colonial days this was sometimes encouraged to provide cheap labour in mines or planations. In post-independence Africa the flow of migrants has been towards countries enjoying comparative prosperity. Between 1950 and 1970, large numbers of people drifted to Ghans, Ivory Coast and Senegal from Togo, Upper Volta, Mali and Guinea. In 1970, despite a marked trend towards emigration, Ghana had 460,000 foreigners. By 1975 the active foreign population was down to 225,000. Ivory Coast, still a main target for immigrants, had 1.4 million foreigners out of a total population of 6.7 million according to the 1975 census. Senegal has an estimated 995,000 foreigners.

44. South Africa has had a long record of importing labour from neighbouring countries to work in its mines especially. Over half a million migrant workers were residing there in 1970. In 1975, 67 per cent of the labour force in the mining industry were foreign workers. The numbers have decreased in recent years due to the South African Government's policies and outside criticism.

45. In North Africa, migratory movements have been more towards Europe and the Middle East. The massive emigration of French nationals following Algerian independence was followed by Algerians emigrating to France under an agreement reached between the two countries. North African migrations to Europe reached their peak in the 60's and early 70's, but the tide has ebbed somewhat. By 1978 Algerian emigrants in France numbered 790,000, Moroccans numbered 300,000. Other Moroccans numbering 174,000 were in Belgium, Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands.

46. The oil boom has attracted many foreigners to the Middle East and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. Many had come from Egypt, Sudan, and Somalia and an unknown number from East and even West Africa. In Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, it was estimated that in 1975 40% of the active population or 430,000 consisted of emigrant workers.

47. Mass migratory movements of this kind have important demographic consequences. Their economic, social and political consequences can be significant. On the one hand these migrants may provide much needed labour to promote economic development of other countries. The migrants may remit large sums home to support their dependants and provide some needed foreign exchange. Their orientational horizons may also widen. But the social consequences can be unhappy where families are separated for long periods, or the migrants are subjected to discriminatory treatment, and pressed into the most menial and unenlightening jobs. Where, as happens from time to time, their services are no longer needed, the return home has sometimes been accompanied by resentment and humiliating treatment by the host country. This has not always generated political goodwill.

48. The problem of migrants as a whole is that many suffer from many of the disabilities or hardships of refugees, but not being official refugees in the accepted sense, they may have no access to organised help. With the increasing economic hardships brought on by the world recession, and deteriorating economic situation in many countries affected by drought and instability, migrations, both internal and external, may well increase. Some action has been initiated in recent years to provide assistance, protection and welfare for migrants. The U.N. General Assembly Charter on the Rights of Migrant workers adopted in 1978 and the Lusaka - MULPOC Conference of the same year on the position of migrant workers in Southern Africa were all commendable attempts to address the problem. There is still need to continue monitoring of the problem of migrants and to set up appropriate mechanisms to help migrant workers. Here again much depends on regional co-operation and inter-African goodwill and understanding.

III. Social Policies

49. Social policies have become an instrument for providing guidelines or indicating the philosophy by which governments conduct their activities aimed at improving the welfare of their population. The objectives of social policies usually aim at:

(a) comprehensive human resource development;
(b) raising living standards and quality of life;
(c) improving health and human welfare;
(d) ensuring social justice and equity;
(e) providing adequate social security for all segments of the population.

50. Most national development plans enunciate policies and include plans to give effect to these social policy objectives. Given the differing economic, political and social circumstances of the 50 countries associated with the E.C.A., it is only to be expected that there is no uniformity of approach to, or achievement of, these objectives.

51. These objectives, which are in effect human rights provisions, may become obscured if economic crisis or political instability persists or is frequent. Unfortunately these unhappy situations have become facts of life in Africa. Their effect is to erode achievements and efforts in the field of human rights and social development.

52. The framework for achieving social policy objectives also differs from country to country. Three main patterns or systems seem to emerge:

(a) free enterprise or laissez-faire systems placing emphasis on individual enterpreneurship to maximise productivity and using taxation as a weapon for achieving a more equitable re-distribution of economic benefits;

(b) controlled economic systems in which both production and distribution of resources are centrally managed to ensure equity,

(c) mixed systems in which certain sectors of the economy are centrally controlled and others are left to free enterprise.

53. There are hardly any pure models. Beside the formal structures detailed in national development plans and policy statements there are always the informal policies, or so-called marginal sectors based on traditional or indigenous production and marketing systems. Not much attention has been paid to these informal sectors but their importance and resilience should not be overlooked. In many countries it is these "marginal" sectors that have sustained the life of the poor and under-privileged. Social policies and programmes must come to terms with these informal policies and make appropriate accommodations. This can only be properly done if serious studies are done on these sectors to see how the two can be married together.

54. The Lagos Plan of Action, as has been noted earlier, strongly underlines the role that human resource development can play in socio-economic development. All countries in Africa, in fact, recognise this role. The development of the human resource is important irrespective of the state of any national economy. Providing education that is both comprehensive and relevant to people must be considered as a human right for all individuals. The problem in Africa has been, not simply that there is not enough of such training and education for most people, but that what is available often tends to alienate people from their traditions and cultural values, instead of building upon them. Such alienation tends to polarise the population, and by orienting the educated categories towards the industrial countries and at the same time shoring up their standard of living well above the per capita national output, creates an elite that loses touch frequently with the common people.

55. Future programmes for training and education must deliberately aim at unifying the people by giving proper place to traditional culture and values as well as upgrading traditional skills and know-how.

56. Raising living standards and the general quality of life as a social policy has often been made dependent on a rising GNP, the principle being that the size of the national cake must be increased before fair distribution can be done, otherwise there is a danger of simply diffusing poverty. The examples of China and Sri Lanka do show, however, that with a relatively modest GNP, the quality of life for the people as a whole can be improved considerably by the introduction of appropriate structures, participatory development programmes, and a determined effort at equitable distribution of national resources. A UNICEF report states: "officially Sri Lanka is one of the poorest countries in the Third World.

Paradoxically, it is also one of the more developed. With a GNP per head of only US$300 per year, it has managed to make more progress towards meeting its people's basic human needs - for food, health and education - than most countries which are many times richer".

57. The Tables below show progress made in Sri Lanka since independence in 1948 and comparison with other LDC's as of 1981: 14/

Year	Infant mortality rate	Death rate	Literacy rate
1946	141	19.8	57%
1950	82	12.6	68%
1965	63	8.5	N/A
1977	49	6.4	N/A
1980	44	6.0	85%
1981	43	6.0	85%

	Sri Lanka	Average for 32 poorest countries (excluding India and China)
Life expectancy	69 yrs.	50 yrs.
Infant mortality	43	124
Birth rate	27	44
Literacy	85%	40%
Average annual growth of per capita GNP (1960 - 81)	2.5%	0.3%

58. China has shown the world what can be done to promote comprehensive medical care using the so-called "barefoot doctor" system. They have also demonstrated how heavy expenditure on clothing can be reduced to release resources for more critical development by severly limiting dress designs.

59. The above examples demonstrate what is possible even within meagre means by defining appropriate social policies and carefully elaborating on them in order to produce an integrated or carefully co-ordinated programme to improve the quality of life for the many. These examples also demonstrate the promotion of social justice and equity in practice.

60. Where declared social policies do not seem to influence the daily conduct of governments and the programmes they implement, such social policies only promote cynicism among the people and weakens their resolve to support programmes for development. Lack of social justice and equity are a major source of political instability in Africa.

61. Policies on social security so far, mainly provide for employees in the public sector or in firms or establishments of a certain size. For the mass of self-employed, casual workers, etc. little provision exists. Some thought should be given to introducing measures that can cover those in this most needy category.

62. Special programmes for the underprivileged and disadvantaged groups should form part of the national programme to provide social security for all. Fortunes change fast in Africa because of fragile economies, political upheavals and inadequate measures for combating natural disasters. Therefore rehabilitation, settlement and resettlement programmes, co-ordinated at both national and international levels need to be upgraded. If the spirit and the letter of the Lagos Plan of Action are observed, the causes of many of these problems will be eliminated or considerably reduced. But there will always be those personal cases of handicap. Policies and programmes exist in almost all countries to cater for such people. But the story everywhere is the same - limited facilities and limited scope. Rehabilitative and remedial programmes are expensive, and in competition with other programmes for development, such welfare programmes take a back seat.

63. The orientation of welfare programmes still continue to be curative and remedial. Much has been written and said in recent years about changing this orientation towards preventative programmes aimed at eliminating many of the causes of the social privations. Social workers, and other development practitioners have still not been accorded their proper status. Their training is still not of a high quality. There exists only a few university level courses for social workers in Africa. While English-speaking countries have made a good start in this direction, (Egypt, among Arabic speaking countries has long been a leader in this field), French-speaking countries still have a longer way to go.

64. The African Centre for Applied Research and Training in Social Development (ACARTSOD) based in Tripoli was set up under ECA/OAU auspices in 1980 to upgrade the quality of social work personnel and undertake needed research to form the basis of informed policies, and effective programmes.

65. There are also proposals to set up an African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. This is in recognition of the fact that the field of social defence has not received sufficient attention. Political upheavals, and deteriorating economic conditions are creating an atmosphere of frustration and anomie which are reflected in a higher incidence of crime, alcoholism, vagrancy, drug addiction, thuggery, prostitution and so on. Traditional attitudes and treatment of offenders need revamping if many delinquents and would-be delinquents are to be rescued from a life of crime. Hence the need to upgrade the training of social workers, prison staff, and law-enforcing agents in the field of social defence. Serious studies also need to be undertaken to enhance understanding of the causes, conditions and treatment of social deviants as a whole within the African context.

66. Man shall not live by bread alone, and the social quality of life as a dimension of human rights must become a prominent part of the quest for social development.

IV. Agriculture and Food Production

67. The record of agricultural production in Africa over the last two decades has been disappointing and gives much cause for concern. The living standards of the vast majority of Africans will not improve and poverty and privation may become more diffuse unless there is considerable improvement in this sector. The problems are not merely economic. They have serious social and political ramifications.

68. It is estimated that agriculture accounts for between 30 to 60 per cent of GNP in African countries. 15/ In human terms, about 64.7 per cent of the economically active population was engaged in agriculture in 1981. This represents a gradual drop from 71.5 per cent in 1970. 16/ Agriculture therefore continues to be the most important sector in economic growth for most countries, certainly for most of the people.

69 Agricultural production by its very nature is subject to fluctuations, due to various factors. But the overall picture shows a general downward trend. Between 1961 and 1970 food production increased by 2.6% per annum barely keeping pace with the population growth rate. Between 1970 and 1979, food production increased by only 1.6 per cent per annum. The situation improved in 1980 when there was an increase of 4.0 per cent. This fell to 2.7 per cent in 1981, and indications are that 1982 will be no better. Against an annual population increase of 3.0 per cent, the gains are negligible. Non-food products and livestock fared even worse. Table 3 shows a breakdown of production in agriculture, between 1970 and 1981. Thus in Africa as a whole (excluding South Africa) total agricultural production rose by 1.4 per cent per annum between 1970 - 79, and 2.5 per cent during 1979 - 80, and 1980 - 81. On a per capita basis this represents negative growth persisting over the total period 1970 - 81.

70. The consequences of a persisting decline in per capita food production need to be looked at. To begin with this affects incomes of over 60% of the people. It also means that millions of people are not getting adequate food and nourishment. So it poses health problems for the people. Poor stamina, poor resistance to endemic and debilitating diseases are some of the consequences. In some cases, it is actual starvation and death that ensues. In the FAO/OAU publication Famine in Africa, the situation is starkly portrayed. When there are poor harvests, people already living at subsistence level have no reserves to feed on. When rains fail, they eat the little food reserved for replanting. They have no money to buy new seeds or seedlings. People lose their livestock because there is no feed for them, and sometimes no water. Almost everything goes. Sometimes people simply have to abandon their traditional homes to seek a living elsewhere. It is altogether a traumatic and harrowing experience for the rural poor. Those closest to the land are often the first victims of failure to produce food. Urban populations have easy access to food stores and imported food supplies, and being close to the seats of power and of the administration, they can demonstrate their plight and

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PRODUCTION: GROWTH RATES BY MULPO

1970-79, 1979

Commodity	North Africa			West Africa			Cent
	1970-1979	1979 1980	1980-1981	1970-1979	1979-1980	1980-1981	1970-1979
Total Food 1/	2.3	4.3	1.6-	1.3	2.6	3.8	1.9
Cereals 2/	0.7	5.9	10.6	1.8	1.2	4.3	1.4
Roots & Tubers 3/	6.6	8.4	6.8-	1.0	4.6	0.7	2.3
Pulses	0.5-	10.8-	6.3-	0.5	0.8	0.1	2.7
Vegetable Oils	1.3	8.7	4.5-	0.6-	1.8	8.7	0.2
Livestock Prod.4/	3.2	4.3	3.6	2.6	6.2	5.4	3.9
Non-Food Crops 5/	1.[illegible]-	3.5	3.0-	0.1	3.8-	20.5	1.4
Total Production6/	2.2	4.3	1.6-	1.2	2.2	4.5	1.8

Notes:

1. Total Food - Cereals, Non-Cereals Food Crops, Livest
2. Cereals - wheat, rice paddy, maize, barley and mille
3. Non Cereal Food Crops - Roots, tubers, sugar, pulses
4. Livestock Products - Beef, mutton, pigmeat, poultry,
5. Non Food Crops - Coffee, tea, tobacco, cotton, jute
6. Total Production - Cereals, Non Cereal Foods, Non Fo

Computation based on production data weighed by 1974

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S AND AFRICA EXCLUDING SOUTH AFRICA

80 and 1980-81

al Africa		Econ.Com. of the Great Lakes Countries			East & Southern Africa			Africa Excluding South Africa		
1979-1980	1980-1981	1970-1979	1979-1980	1980-1981	1970-1979	1979-1980	1980-1981	1970-1979	1979-1980	1980 1981
3.3	1.7	1.7	1.6	3.4	1.1	1.0	3.1	1.6	4.0	2.7
9.2	0.4	1.8	1.5	1.5	0.1-	0.6	5.4	0.9	3.5	1.3
1.9	2.5	2.1	2.3	5.3	2.5	2.4	2.5	1.8	3.6	1.8
1.1	5.6	1.5	0.5	1.4	0.6-	1.4	4.7	0.1	1.1-	1.1
3.3	1.9	1.8-	0.3	3.9-	0.8-	0.9-	0.8	0.2-	2.7	4.4
3.0	3.8	2.8	1.1	3.3	1.4	0.8	2.8	2.4	2.9	3.7
0.8	0.8	1.9	0.7-	3.7-	2.0-	1.4	2.2	0.3-	0.6	2.5
2.9	1.4	1.7	1.4	2.8	0.7	1.0	3.0	1.4	2.5	2.5

ck Products

vegetables, bananas, citrus, fruits, vegetable oils and cocoa
milk and eggs
nd rubber
d Crops, Livestock Products

1976 average per unit value.

pile on pressure for immediate attention. No one knows exactly how many hundreds of thousands of people perished during the Sahelian drought of 1973-74. Since 1979, the persisting drought has been claiming many victims. Again accurate estimates are difficult to get because so many perish unrecorded and unmourned in the bush.

71. Over the past decade, commercial imports of food grains have increased three times faster than even population growth. This is in addition to substantial rise in food aid brought under non-commercial programmes. There is now a noticeable shift in consumption patterns. More and more people are now living on imported wheat and rice, thus aggravating Africa's food dependency.

72. Some of the figures given above may be questioned, especially because of the difficulty of accurately estimating production in subsistence agriculture. But the rising imports of food grain and the periodic shortages on local markets are ample indications that there are serious shortfalls in local food production. Food aid to Africa has risen annually from 800,000 tons in the mid 1970's to 1.5 million tons in 1980 and the figure may rise in the near future. [18]

73. The situation is even more disappointing when it is noted that during 1973-80 there was massive external funding for agriculture focussed mainly on food production totalling $5 billions. But investments as a whole on food production have not been substantial. More emphasis was placed on production of cash crops by most African governments.

74. Food insecurity in a country presents a threat of a most dangerous kind, especially to the rural populations, for it threatens many thousands of human lives, sometimes whole communities, their way of life and survival as a group. Mass movements in the wake of famine can cause serious political upheavals as well as upset the economies of host areas or countries. There arises also compel the diversion of scare foreign exchange from needed development schemes to the importation and consumption of food, thus further aggravating an already serious economic situation. For many governments these shortfalls in food production compel regular appeals to be made to donor countries to come to their aid. It is not a situation that helps the morale of people nor the prestige and independence of their governments.

75. What are the factors and causes behind these frequently re-enacted food crises?

76. The FAO publication Famine in Africa notes that "famine is rarely a sudden emergency". So-called "natural" and "man-made" causes of famine are not wholly separable since natural causes are often the direct or indirect consequences of man's actions. The document then goes on to state:

> "In very general terms, it may be said that the food crisis in Africa reflects a gradual breakdown of the delicate balance between the physical environment, population, technology and social structures and systems. This breakdown is by itself sufficient to explain not only the long-term deterioration in the food situation but also most of the periodic catastrophic food shortages. ... The cause of food deficiencies and famines in Africa is systemic in nature and should be analysed strictly in those terms". [19]

77. A report prepared by the World Bank, Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa is more pragmatic and sums up the factors that underlie this recurring poor performance as follows:

> "Agriculture was also neglected for a long time by government and donors, as it was by development theorists. Further, there was a misallocation of investment, notably an excessive emphasis on large-scale government-operated schemes. Also, agricultural and economic policies and institutional frameworks were not conducive to increasing output: official prices were too low, marketing systems too uncertain, inefficient, and uncompetitive; input supplies too irregular; and participation of farmers in rural affairs too limited. The agricultural extension effort was weakened by unfavourable policies, deficient research output, and the organizational deficiencies of the public sector agencies which were responsible for spearheading rural development".

78. These two assessments represent different approaches to the problem of poor agriculture. The list of causes, is comprehensive, but a few more may be elaborated here:

(a) There are still in some parts of Africa large under-utilised lands. It is estimated that potential arable land available currently is about 1.7 hectares per person, but only 0.55 hectares per person is utilised at present. This may be due to a number of factors: difficulty of access to farm the land, lack of means to cultivate, emigration of young people from the rural areas to the towns, inadequate land tenure system leaving large areas idle, inadequate incentives, and so on

(b) At the same time as the above, there is increasing cultivation of marginal lands due to population pressure in certain areas. The U.N. Secretary-General reported:

> "Deserts in Africa have been encroaching on useful agricultural land at the rate of 60,000 to 70,000 square kilometers per year. It is estimated that every year, some 25,000 square kilometers of African land is being lost for food production and rural earning capacity because of soil erosion". 21/

(c) There is a lack of supportive infrastructure - agricultural credit of finance schemes, feeder roads, storage facilities, haulage trucks and farm machinery or even routine farm tools, and adequate rural markets

(d) Each year it is estimated that some 30 per cent of food products are lost through pests. 22/ This is a problem deriving from poor pest control, and inadequate and ineffective preservation and storage practices and facilities

(e) Poor farm wages have been upheld by governments to keep food prices down. But this has been a major disincentive leading to low investment, and rural-urban drift of young farm workers

(f) Wars and political upheavals - too frequent in Africa (and other Third World areas for that matter) have often aggravated the food situation

(g) Drought and poor rainfall have caused major catastrophies. But the consequences of these have been far more serious because no adequate measures have been taken to mitigate their effects. Droughts in Africa occur with almost predictable regularity. 23/ There are, of course, the floods which can be equally catastrophic. Along with such natural catastrophies come diseases or epidemics like malaria, bilharzia, sleeping sickness, cholera, affecting humans, and trypanosomiasis, rinderpest, foot and mouth disease etc. affecting livestock. These are not beyond human control, and are sometimes the result of the degradation of the environment through human carelessness like destruction of trees, and woody vegetation and overgrazing;

(h) Inspite of many modern and technological improvements employed in agriculture, African agriculture still largely depends on traditional methods and tools. Consequently productivity per capita remains very low. There are not enough people trained in modern methods, not enough modern equipment, not enough inputs like fertilisers, improved seed, etc., to raise productivity.

79. It is obvious that the problem of agricultural production is not a simple one. To deal with it, effectively, many other issues must be taken into account. A programme for developing agriculture and improving food resources must be tied in with the general plan for African development. The Lagos Plan of Action lays down the strategy to be followed. Basically the strategy is to promote self-sufficiency in food production and to direct non-food production towards inter-African interests. The export of cash crops to the industrial countries will continue as part of a general programme of agricultural expansion but it will not occupy the central place it has occupied hitherto.

80. To give agriculture its proper place more resources will need to be directed towards this most crucial area. Reforms will be necessary in some countries in the land tenure system. Infrastructural provisions will need to be upgraded and expanded. Irrigation schemes will need to be expanded to support cultivation in areas of capricious rainfall.

81. Fisheries have a potential not properly tapped. Forestry will also have to be promoted. Aforestation programmes have been launched in some countries e.g. Kenya to stem the tide of dissertification and soil erosion. At the same time this will help provide some of the fuelwood on which so many millions depend for heat energy.

82. Livestock production will have to be expanded. In all of these activities the need to train manpower and to provide necessary research and technical support will have to be satisfied. FAO and other inter-governmental organizations operating in Africa are providing expertise and funds in this respect.

V. Rural Development

83. Any programme to deal with rural poverty and rural development must be comprehensive, inter-disciplinary and inter-sectoral. Agricultural productivity will be central to it. People will need to be mobilised whether in farm cooperatives, or in individual family units, to respond to clearly laid down plans, adequate incentives and reasonable guarantees. The social organization of rural

agriculture is an important element in agricultural success. It should bring in primary health, adult literacy and education, rural water supply, and rural housing as basic inputs. Without these supportive services, the environment is unlikely to inspire confidence.

84. Despite the failures of the past to stimulate agriculture and food production, the potential for improvement is considerable and is amply demonstrated by successful projects. It will be some time before the many constraints listed above can be adequately tackled. A determined and sustained response to the needs of agriculture and rural development in general should gradually change the situation.

85. The interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral nature of agricultural and rural development requires that we take a careful look at the structures for implementation. It has been widely accepted that rural development is best undertaken within an integrated framework. Integration leads to savings on manpower, use of facilities and clients' time; it minimises inter-departmental conflicts, duplication and so on. Several international conferences held over the past 20 years have underlined these advantages, and many governments have indicated their preference for integrated programmes and projects. In fact many integrated projects for rural development have been undertaken in many countries.

86. Records of success of many of these projects are not many. But it will be unfair to suggest that integration has failed. Since agriculture is basic to many of these rural development programmes and projects, the many constraints on agriculture discussed earlier have tended to inhibit the success of the integrated projects.

87. A further constraint on the success of integrated projects is the fact that there is little specific training provided for staff on such projects to understand the special problems associated with integrated projects and how to deal with them. Personnel need to be trained for such projects, and the different agencies co-operating must have a clear idea of their respective roles and obligations. The authority hierachy must be clearly defined. Resources, facilities and equipment needed must be set out and their deployment must be worked out. Finally the clients or beneficiaries must know their place or role in the scheme and their interest sustained so that they in turn can keep up pressure and momentum to ensure successful execution. Integrated projects do well when properly planned and executed. Failure to do so can result in needless conflict and confusion.

VI. Health and Nutrition

88. In the health sector, progress since 1979 has been somewhat mixed. As indicated earlier, mortality has continued to be high, especially among infants and young children under five. There has been significant improvement however in many countries where the maternal and child health programmes have been comprehensive. But the majority of people still have no easy access to modern medical facilities. For Africa as a whole infant mortality rates have dropped from 142 per thousand in 1978-79 to 120 in 1980-81. Life expectancy is also steadily increasing.

89. Medical and paramedical personnel are still in very short supply, and the majority are still concentrated in the large urban centres. Between 1970 and 1980 the number of persons per doctor dropped from 10,000 to 6500. 24/ But the ratio is still very high, and variations between countries are quite marked. North Africa has the lowest ratios and this appears to be reflected in the life expectancy tables. Egypt, for example, had one physician to about 970 persons in 1980 whereas the corresponding figures for Ethiopia, Burkina Faso and Burundi were 58,490, 48,510, and 45,020. The ratio of nurses per head of population is much lower, but is still quite high. Here again there are wide country variations. In Mauritius, Congo, Ghana and Kenya the ratios are 610, 790, 780, and 550 respectively. On the other hand, corresponding ratios for Rwanda, Niger and Uganda were 9,840, 4,650 and 4,180. 26/

90. There is, of course, no necessary correspondence between number of physicians and nurses and the morbidity or life expectancy levels in a country. There are many intervening factors such as the physical environment, income levels, distribution of medical services and personnel and types and quality of services provided.

91. The health of the population is also seriously affected by the quality of water available to the majority and the nutritional status of the people. The importance of these two factors has been stressed in recent years, and most countries have plans to remedy the situation. In both Lesotho and Botswana polluted water has been responsible for a high incidence of cases of dysentry, gastro-enteritis and typhoid.

92. The availability of wholesome water for Africa's population is becoming critical, even in the big cities with modern facilities. This is because urban population growth has outstripped the cities ability to supply sufficient water, or maintain existing services. This may pose health hazards especially for the crowded poverty stricken communities. In the region as a whole only about one in four have access to clean water. 26/

93 The problem of malnutrition is compounded by poverty, ignorance and indifference, and worsening food shortages. It is well known that as income levels rise, nutritional levels also tend to rise, but lack of information about nutritional values of food and the importance of balanced and adequate diet, coupled with traditional eating habits can prevent even those with adequate means from raising their nutritional status. A large number of people in Africa are malnourished, 27/ and those who suffer most are children. In most cases, people are not even aware of their poor nutritional status and that of their children. James P. Grant, Executive Director of UNICEF, reports:

> "Indeed so invisible is the problem, that in one recent study, almost 60 per cent of mothers whose children were suffering from malnutrition believed that their children were growing normally and developing well". 28/ There is a problem of perception here, and Dr. Grant underlines it:

> "The Third World's hunger is a hidden hunger. Visible malnutrition is rare. And it is time that the skin and bone image of the starving baby - an image which is too often used to represent the developing countries - was replaced by a greater international understanding of what child malnutrition means".

94. A number of governments have set up bodies to implement and monitor nutrition programmes within their territories, but widespread recognition of the importance of of nutrition is still lagging far behind. A recent World Bank study of the problem sums up the case for nutrition:

> "Nutrition is fundamental to life, work, and well-being. Inadequate nutrition - or malnutrition - is responsible for human and economic waste of consequential proportions. In developing societies, malnutrition plays a part in substantial numbers of deaths, and inadequate diet and related illness interfere with the learning ability, capacity to work, behaviour, and well-being of large segments of the populations. The nutritional state of the populace both influences and reflects the level and pace of national development. Adequate nutrition therefore must be viewed not only as an objective but also as a means of economic development". 29/

95. The problem of malnutrition has many dimensions and an attack on it must be co-ordinated and mounted from several fronts. It will involve actively encouraging the growth, preparation and consumption of the right foods. To do this adequately, food production in general must be stepped up to raise income levels, especially of rural populations. A joint FAO/WHO/OAU Regional Food and Nutrition Commission for Africa, set up in 1974, recommended at its meeting in Accra in December 1981 that member States should give consideration to including food and nutrition as components of all rural development, agricultural, and primary health care programmes.

96. Considering the many taboos still existant in some communities which deny young children and women the right to consume certain nutritious items like eggs, parts of chicken, etc. compounded by ignorance of the properties of various food items, a full-scale programme of education for all ages and categories of people is necessary. Community and social workers, agricultural extension and community health workers, school teachers, nurses, etc. all need to be made aware of the importance of nutrition and the food items in their communities or areas that will ensure a balanced diet. These change agents should then incorporate nutrition education and advice in their respective programmes to the public, their clients or their pupils.

97. Nutrition programmes are particularly important for lactating mothers, pregnant women, babies and young children. But all ages need the information as well as a balanced diet. Existing programmes are not sufficiently widespread and not intensive enough to reach the majority of the people.

98. The range and urgency of the health requirements in Africa have been beyond the scope of conventional medical facilities to cope with because they are largely hospital based and are expensive in terms of both the trained manpower needed, and the modern facilities. It will take decades and much expenditure to provide adequate hospital services for all the people.

99. The decision at Alma Ata to reorient the provision of health services to the communities and generate the impetus for improved health from the grass roots has been widely accepted. Primary Health Care (PHC) as it is called, provides a reasonable hope and means for getting prompt services to the people and for quickly eliminating incipient health problems like epidemics.

100. Essentially, PHC envisages the use of non-physicians to monitor public health programmes in their communities, provide simple curative services, and refer more serious cases to appropriate medical centres. The advantages of the system are that by employing a lower cadre of para-medical staff with shorter and less expensive training, more medical and health personnel and services can be made available to all sections of the country. By using largely locally recruited staff, the danger of trained personnel drifting to the urban centres and abandoning the rural communities will be reduced; people will come to accept medicare as a community affair and responsibility and therefore show greater responsiveness to community health. It will help reduce the physical and social distance between the people and their source of medical help. It will encourage the use of local medical lore by incorporating some local healers and e.g. traditional birth attendants, in the community's medical service system after some reorientation to modern practices. This is the chief means to be used to try and provide basic health services for all people in Africa by the year 2000. Given the high ratio of doctor to people in Africa, the very expensive system of hospital based medical care, PHC is the most reasonable means for providing adequate health care to all the people.

101. There are unfortunately, medical personnel who are still unhappy about what they regard as an "invasion" of non-physicians into their former domain. A conference organised by the Pathfinder Fund on "The Non-physician and Family Health in Sub-Saharan Africa" 30/ considered many aspects of PHC and how it should be implemented. Taking note of the fact that health has always been a community responsibility, that all peoples have from time immemorial taken steps to safeguard their health, the new approach of PHC was seen as a revamping and revitalisation of an old idea to suit modern conditions in Africa. PHC offers the challenge to people to do something about their health; it is participatory, largely self-sustaining and relatively inexpensive.

102. A few countries have already started monitoring their comprehensive programmes based on the PHC idea. The actual programmes differ from country to country. Zambia and Malawi are selected here as examples and for brief comment:

103. A review of the Zambian programme jointly undertaken by the Zambian Ministry of Health, WHO, SIDA and UNICEF 31/ noted certain problem points in the PHC systems:

(a) PHC requires extensive deployment of certain essential drugs which should be available cheaply or at no cost to the people. With the phenomenal rise in the cost of drugs, the Ministry of Health has been unable to keep up supply and this is likely to undermine public confidence in the system;

(b) Poor transportation and communication links hinder the community health worker from visiting his "parish" regularly;

(c) A centralised decision making system inhibits the exercise of initiatives at provincial and district levels to solve their own problems. This also affected allocation of resources and drugs;

(d) There were problems with the organisational structure, and the need for a powerful co-ordinating body to pool personnel and resources from different institutions was recommended;

(e) Manpower training to reorient existing medical and paramedical staff as well well as the community health workers was also proposed.

104. In Malawi a review of their PHC programme led to a shift, in 1982, in the functions of the PHC workers. 32/ These had been trained to work as part-time multi-purpose health cadres. But it was found that they tended to devote most of their time to sanitation to the neglect of other tasks. Consequently, it was decided to train more part-time persons each to handle a different set of tasks like promoting water and sanitation, or nutrition and nutritional surveillance, or communicable disease control; or a TBA (traditional birth attendant or midwife) dealing mainly with maternal care. These PHC workers are given a small monthly stipend by the Malawi Government, but if the system expands to cover the whole country, the costs would be enormous. Therefore consideration is being given to encourage the village communities to provide such rewards.

105. For some time the introduction of PHC will have its teething problems and many approaches are possible. Central control may weaken community enthusiasm to participate and contribute. Some balance will need to be struck between central surveillance of the system to ensure that it is working and no bottlenecks are created and local control to encourage grass roots support and participation.

106. The importance of educating the entire population to show concern and practice the various health measures needed for community welfare must be evident. Personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, immunization, and nutrition should be seen as matters for community concern. If the general level of awareness of these matters are raised in both school and community, much can be achieved in promoting the health of the people inspite of a stagnating GDP.

VII. Education, Literacy and Vocational Training

107. Education continues to receive prior attention in the annual budgets of many African governments. This is in recognition of the key role education plays in human resource development and its consequent effect on national development. But maintaining the momentum of educational development and expansion which characterised the 1960's when most of the countries became independent has become increasingly difficult. Educational costs have gone up considerably - school buildings, equipment, textbooks, salaries of qualified teachers. In addition the school age population has been growing rapidly.

108. The aim of governments to achieve free universal primary education now seems difficult of attainment for some countries. But progress has nontheless been impressive. Between 1960 and 1978 the proportion of primary school age population enrolled in schools rose from 36 per cent to 63 per cent. 33/ The proportion in secondary schools also rose from 3 per cent to 13 per cent. By 1980 the corresponding figures were 70 per cent and 14 per cent. The proportion in universities and higher educational institutions is now about 1.8 per cent. 34/ In all three categories there were fewer women than men in school, although the gap is narrowing. Enrolment rates for females exceed those of males in Lesotho and Madagascar.

109. At the primary school level, some countries like Lesotho, Togo, Kenya, Cameroons and Mauritius have virtually attained their goals of universal primary education. On the other hand at least 13 countries have primary school enrolment rates well below 50 per cent. Not surprisingly all these are among the 26 LDCs in Africa.

110. The bottleneck occurs for most countries at the secondary school level where school places are limited and about 60-80 per cent of those leaving the primary schools therefore get left out. This in effect means that for a vast majority of young people, the curricula in the schools has become somehow problematic because the products from the system seem unsuited for any special jobs and because their schooling has oriented them to white collar jobs without adequate preparation. Many join the ranks of the unemployed feeling frustrated and bitter. The answer proposed by some countries is to keep these young school leavers in school for two more years to mature a bit and upgrade their education. Other countries have tried continuation schools to orient them to some trade.

111. Vocational schools are a major alternative for those who fail to gain admission to secondary schools or teacher training colleges. Here again there are simply not enough of these and their curricula are not as well regulated as are those for secondary education. The range of vocational schools covers just about every trade. Unfortunately, their development is not systematically related to job openings or possible productive areas. One finds in some countries for example that not enough local tailors or hair dressers are being trained, but there may be too many secretaries. Again no proper relationship has been established to enable those who go to technical or vocational schools to rejoin the mainstream of the educational system to continue or upgrade their knowledge and skills.

112. The problems discussed above are sufficient to demonstrate that conventional approaches to education are not likely to fulfil Africa's hopes of using education to promote development on a massive scale. The Lagos Plan of Action recognises the crucial role that human resource development at different levels must play in the development of Africa along the guidelines proposed. Mobilisation of the people to play their full role in development requires that all should receive a reasonable measure of knowledge, and skills and correct attitudes. It is equally essential that people should receive training that will be of immediate use in securing them jobs, especially in self-employment. With the majority of people living in rural areas, education and training must be oriented towards providing skills useful for rural development and rural living.

113. The general level of literacy in Africa is still very low. Inspite of the valiant attempts made during the past two decades to expand educational facilities and school enrolment, large numbers of people missed the school boat. Adult literacy programmes intended to provide those who missed school with minimum reading skills were mounted in many countries in the 1960's and 1970's. Unfortunately, some of these programmes have lost their momentum. In many instances, those who acquired the reading skills had no opportunity or incentive to utilise the skills, and many lost the skills. Functional literacy programmes are more meaningful since they are related to some vocational skills which involve utilization of the reading skills.

114 The proportion of illiterate people in Africa has been going down. Between 1970 and 1980 the percentage of illiterates dropped from 71 per cent to 61 per cent. But the actual numbers involved has risen from 106 to 118 million. 35/ The disadvantages of illiteracy are well known. In a modernising world the disadvantages of illiteracy can deny a person many rights and privileges as a citizen. Many job openings and public offices are closed to illiterates, communication with them is limited, so are opportunities for upgrading their competence. Living in a modern world requires much knowhow about gadgets, equipment, and ability to read notices, fill forms etc. A determined effort to ensure that all adults, and those who missed or dropped out of school get some basic reading and arithmetical skills will not only improve the welfare of the population, but also enhance their participation in national development.

115. The structure of the formal educational system itself needs overhauling. Much has been written about this, and much has been proved satisfactory. The question has to be asked: Is it really necessary to keep a child in school from ages three to five years up to ages 22 to 25 years before he can be considered properly educated to be given a responsible job? There is no advocacy here for lowering standards. But much that is in the school curricula may be unnecessary. For a well-to-do society the luxury of 20 years education may be affordable. In Africa, where basic literacy is still available to less than half of the population, some short-cuts to education must be found. The experiments of Dr. Ivan Ilich, based on an improvement of the apprenticeship system coupled with functional literacy may prove a useful alternative for young adults who have missed or dropped out of the formal school. 36/ The programme involves selecting children of about 12 years or older and teaching them a trade - carpentery, masonry, fitting, farming, etc. - through an organized apprenticeship system. Functional literacy is made a component of the training. In a matter of two to four years, it is possible to produce a young person who is reasonably literate and with a reasonable skill to earn his living. There can be follow-up programmes to upgrade their skills and knowledge. The important point is that the programme is short, and by enabling the young people to get straight into a working situation they acquire experience, and earn part of their keep at least.

116.. Many government departments and large private organizations have their own training centres and programmes for upgrading the competence of their staff. It so happens that these in-service or departmental training centres have more flexibility in their operations and can exercise initiatives more easily in curricula changes and personnel selection than the formal institutions of education. This is a factor that must be borne in mind when educational reforms for skill training are being considered. Such departmental centres often have far more experience and may have a much better chance of success. Too often the much heralded changes in the formal educational system seem to peter out after a few years principally because their orientation is towards general training in a particular field and not specifically geared towards problem solving for particular job situations.

117. On another level, Africa needs a crops of highly trained personnel to spearhead the movement to make the continent self-sufficient and self-sustaining. As indicated earlier, such manpower is required in several fields, to explore, assess, extract, process and market Africa's vast natural resources as well as provide the planning, construction, management, etc., of projects.

118. Universities and institutions of higher education as well as research centres will have to accept the challenge of providing Africa with the personnel and intelligence for the major transformations expected. The present capacity of universities cannot cope with the challenge without extensive investments and reorganization of their current programmes. Large numbers of people will have to be trained and the cost will be prohibitive if the training were to be undertaken in universities outside Africa. There will also be the question of foreign currency involved. In persuit of self-reliance and relevance, the training of higher calibre personnel will have to be reviewed and a proper needs assessment undertaken to ensure that the right calibre of people are trained for the right jobs. Manpower needs must to a large extent determine the programme of university training and research. It may be necessary to effect changes, especially at the postgraduate levels, which may involve shifting from subject areas or disciplines to thematic programmes. New study areas will need to be developed to cover neglected but relevant areas. 37/

119. Since the cost of mounting such comprehensive programmes may well be beyond the financial capacity of many African governments, international co-operation will be needed in assessing national as well as international training needs to cater for national as well as inter-African programme needs.

120. Governments will have to give top priority to the funding of higher educational programmes. There will also be the need to provide the appropriate environment for serious study and research. This will necessitate governments and universities reaching an understanding about their working relationships. It is a sad commentary to reflect that too often governments and universities in Africa do not seem to see eye to eye. Frequent closures of universities following upon student, or faculty protests on public policies, academic freedom, or human rights are now an everyday occurance.

121 By their very nature and function, universities and colleges of higher learning are critical and idealistic. They will not be worth their name if they were otherwise. In Third World countries, and in Africa in particular, this role of universities appears as an irritant to governments already up against many difficulties. If the universities are to play an effective role in human and natural resource development to promote socio-economic development in Africa, then government - university relations need to be considerably improved. Creativity cannot be forced. It needs to be encouraged. No government or university has

a monopoly on intelligence or wisdom. A tolerant mutually respectful and good humoured dialogue between the two is the best way of drawing out the true genius of the continent to serve its interests.

122. Discussions of high level manpower invariably raise the question of the so-called "brain drain". This is another area in which push and pull factors are manifest. It was estimated that between 1962 and 1972 as many as 13,442 scientists, engineers, physicians, surgeons and teachers from Africa migrated to the United States and the United Kingdom. [38] The figures must be much higher now, especially if other host countries like Canada, France, and West Germany, are taken into account.

123. Why do people migrate to the developed countries? Some go because there are no suitable jobs for them at home, or because the conditions of work, or the opportunities for self-improvement on the job are unsatisfactory. A common attraction is the monetary incentive which industrial countries offer. There are also political and personal reasons why some people prefer to stay away from home.

124 If the army of high level manpower trained at great cost by their countries are to return home and contribute to national development, then the relevant factors must be studied and appropriate remedies provided.

VIII. Employment and Income Distribution

125. As noted earlier the majority of people in developing Africa live in the rural areas and are engaged in agricultural pursuits. Even in countries like Nigeria with substantial earnings from oil, the majority of the people are still mainly engaged in agriculture. It was also noted earlier that the record of agricultural growth over the past decade has been chequerred, but the general trend has been a slowing down in per capita production. The slight improvement in agricultural performance in 1980 and 1981 seems to have been reversed again.

126. The reasons for the decline in agriculture have been touched upon in section IV of this paper. What has to be borne in mind is the fact that one of the major factors in low productivity in agriculture is the poor pricing by governments of the major cash and food crops. Many countries like Ghana, Tanzania and Kenya which are very dependent on crops like cocoa, tea, coffee, tobacco etc. find it convenient to "tax" these major foreign exchange earners by buying the commodities at low prices. In some cases the farmers receive only half of the overseas value of their products.

127. The governments of many countries have come to depend on revenue from such sources to meet government expenditures. Some of the farmers' money also goes to support the rather expensive and not always efficient marketing agencies which process the sale of these cash crops.

128. The principal effect of these systems is that farmers are discouraged and they produce less. Their incomes fall. So do their savings, and investments in agriculture also fall. It can be seen therefore that the poor performance in agriculture is leading to progressive lowering of rural incomes.

129. If the farmers, who constitute the largest proportion of the labour force suffer a lowering of their earning capacity, then their purchasing power falls, and those depending on them to buy their services for clothing, and other cheap manufactured goods, for example, will also suffer income reduction, or even find they have no customers. Thus the progressive pauperisation of the agricultural workers leads to a wider spread of poverty and unemployment.

130. There are other factors, of course, responsible for low rural incomes. With the rapid growth of the population, individual farm holdings become smaller in heavily populated areas (which are usually also the fertile areas), and more marginal land is brought under cultivation. For a while this absorbs the surplus labour force, but in terms of income per capita this is likely to decline. At any rate, this "sponge effect" to quote Ian Livingston, or the capacity of the rural areas to absorb surplus labour, has its limits when the sponge becomes saturated. 39/ Even if fresh inputs - fertilisers, improved seeds, pest control - were to be made available, there is a limit to the demand for the higher priced cash crops. The damand for commodities like tea, cocoa and coffee in the industrial North may not be for ever elastic. As demand stagnates, prices may fall, and the farmers may suffer.

131. One sure way out is the development of intra-African trade and a reorientation of crops towards African needs as proposed in the Lagos Plan of Action.

132. In some countries, like Kenya, off-farm income has become significant for enabling rural workers to survive. Some of this income consists of remittances from relatives who are urban wage earners. Livingston reports that in Kenya off-farm sources of income accounted for 43 per cent of total income on average in the rural areas. "Urban connections are thus of major importance to rural households in Kenya". 40/

133. The industrial sector is unable to absorb much of the labour force. The capital intensive nature of most modern industries, 41/ the high per capita cost with respect to labour employed, the diminished imports of industrial inputs due to the fall in export earnings mean that the industrial sector is stagnating or contracting. Industrial workers have to cope with inflation, and where trade unions press for higher wages, they may be in danger of pricing themselves out of their jobs.

134. Countries like Zambia and Zaire which depend on one major commodity like copper face serious problems of unemployment when, as is the case now, there is a slump on the world market.

135. All these factors in agriculture and industry have led to growing unemployment. Many governments have had to cut down on many development projects. ECA calculates that unemployment and under employment in developing Africa has now risen to about 45 per cent of the labour force and the trend will continue if present economic conditions persist. 42/ The rising rates of unemployment have been noticed for some time now in a number of ILO sponsored reports on Jobs and Skills Programme for Africa (JASPA) during the past decade. 43/ There is a real fear that such unemployment could become chronic.

136. Low wages coupled with unemployment and underemployment are the classic recipe for poverty. Estimates for unemployment in urban areas are relatively easy to get. But in rural areas the prevalence of underemployment masks the

true extent of unemployment. In developing countries, underemployment is very much of an extensive phenomenon. It refers to a state in which a person does not have enough remuneration from work to sustain him and his family. This may be due to the fact that there is not enough work to occupy a person full time, or the wages or earnings from the job may be too meagre.

137. Concern has been expressed for some time now in World Bank reports about the incidence of absolute poverty. Robert MacNamara in his famous report to the World Bank Group in Nairobi in 1973 44/ drew forceful attention to the plight of the very poor. In general the rich countries have been getting richer, and the poor countries seem to get poorer in comparison. In the 1960's the per capita GNP of developing countries was about US$200.00 while that of the developed countries was around $4,000.00. In 1981 the developing countries had a per capita GNP of US$728.00 and the developed countries had a corresponding GNP of $8,657.00.45 / Proportionally, the gap has been reduced, but in absolute terms, the gap has widened considerably.

138. In Africa, the number of Least Developed countries has increased from 17 to 26 over the past decade. These regional trends are reflected in the living standards of millions of people. The concept of absolute poverty has been used to categorise those whose income levels are such that they cannot adequately feed themselves and their families. It is a concept that is useful for estimating the extent of the problem of poverty and for providing targets for development programmes and assistance. The World Bank, OECD and the Club of Rome have severally used the concept to make estimates. The problem that arises in determining such estimates is that such data is hard to come by in developing countries, moreover, there are situational factors that affect a monetary assessment of the level of poverty.

139. M.J.D. Hopkins 46/ considers the criteria of food for the poverty line as too restrictive, and proposes that a basic needs concept be used to include other criteria like housing (40 sq. meters per family), education (nine years of schooling) and health (primary health care cover). The effect of such criteria is to enable an assessment to be made of the barest minimum standard for a decent life. Naturally, estimates based on such criteria will vary. The 1978 World Development Report estimated that 37 per cent of the Third World's population was living in absolute poverty in 1974. Projections for the year 2000 indicate that even on the most optimistic assumptions, 13 per cent of the Third World's population would still be in poverty. Hopkins, using the wider range of criteria referred to above, estimates that the proportion may be more than double. 47 /

140. These projections tell a simple story, that a very determined effort will have to be made in developing countries, especially in Africa and Asia, to contain and reduce this spectre of absolute poverty, for although the projections indicate a fall in the proportion in poverty by the year 2000, the absolute numbers will be greatly increased.

141. There are a number of issues to be considered in any future effort to combat poverty:

(a) How to create jobs for the fast growing populations;

(b) How to raise the productivity and income of the worker;

(c) How to ensure a more just and equitable distribution of the national income.

142. These call for drastic changes in the economic structure to stimulate economic activity. Since much of the new effort will have to be in the rural areas, agriculture and agro-based industries will have to be given top priority.

143. It is expected that the urban population in Africa will increase and may reach 40 per cent of the total population over the next two decades. Therefore job creation should have a reasonable industrial base. As proposed in the Lagos Plan of Action, a shift from import substitution in the industrial sector to a new direction towards the production of goods derived from African resources to meet African needs is a necessary strategy for industrial growth.

144. The polarisation and juxtaposition of wealth and poverty in the urban areas in Africa are becoming more and more manifest and achieving provocative dimensions. Can the future design and control of industries help resolve this?

145. As far as income distribution is concerned, there is little indication that the patterns of industrialisation being pursued will lead to a more equitable redistribution of incomes. In a recent publication the late J.F. Rweyemamu summarised a number of case studies thus:

> "The pattern of industrialisation in Africa - namely import substitution industrialisation - is necessarily biased against equitable income distribution. First is the direct effect on income distribution when capital intensive techniques are used in our circumstances of capital scarcity in both raising the share of capital and in concentrating the share of labour on a limited number of usually skilled and almost always higher paid workers. Secondly is the effect on consumption profile since the patterns of demand generated by a highly skewed distribution of income is necessarily biased against the production of mass goods. Thirdly is the effect on the location and organization of production that is invariably urban biased. And finally is the effect on culture, education and aspirations. By reinforcing the attractiveness of careers in large scale urban industries using foreign technology, import substitution industrialisation leads to unprecedented rural urban migration, marginalisation of rural areas and an international brain drain". 48/

146. Any attempt to stimulate the economy and to raise productivity must take into account the factors mentioned above. The self-reliance envisaged in the Lagos Plan of Action requires that local markets must be developed, and such markets cannot be sustained if income levels of the majority of the people are too low to enable them participate and stimulate the market.

IX. Human Settlements

147. Shelter has always featured as one of the basic needs of man. As man's needs grow and his standard of living and his expectations rise, his demands for better shelter become upgraded.

148. The pattern of settlements in Africa is gradually being transformed. From scattered stone and mud settlements, more and more people are now concentrating in urban areas. This concentration leads to a transformation of housing patterns and housing quality. So far much of this has been in imitation or conformity to regulations set during the colonial period. It is necessary to assess the housing needs of Africa today and over the next decade or two, to review the problems that will be encountered and to consider possible approaches to their solution.

149. To begin with there is a rapidly increasing population which, if present trends continue will double itself in 20 to 25 years from now. The implications of this fact are enormous. It means within that span of time, the present housing needs must be met, and the new housing needs to account for as many more people as are alive today. It has taken decades to provide the housing that is available now. Doubling that effort in some 20 years will not be easy. There will be old houses to replace, and in all probability, people will demand better housing and improved facilities.

150. Concurrent with the rural-urban drift, the housing needs of the towns and cities will be much greater than in the rural areas. Urban housing is controlled and has fairly rigid standards. The towns and cities also need a fairly expensive infrastructure of services, electricity, water, sewerage, roads etc. before they can function as decent human settlements. Rural housing is less regulated and traditionally relies on local skills and materials. But even there "modern" influences are bound to be felt, and rural dwellers will be insisting on improved housing.

151. The problems to be considered then are, how can these needs be met? There are issues concerning materials, facilities, design and costs. There are organizational and funding issues also the question of limited time to develop the settlements. Many major cities in Africa are doubling in size and population in ten years or less!

152. The development of human settlements goes beyond the provision of housing for families. It encompasses the whole physical framework for providing shelter and ancillary facilities for domestic, business, and public purposes; it covers the transportation and communication network, recreational facilities and the judicious use of empty spaces. A human settlements programme is a design for living. It must take into account the economic status and the socio-cultural background of the community or target group.

153. The provision of shelter for the rural population must be tied in with the national programme for rural development. To slow down the rural urban drift, new growth points or poles in the rural areas will need to be identified and developed. This means incorporating human settlement programme within a territorial or regional planning programme.

154. To avoid confusion, and improper use of land, proper land use planning must be undertaken. Governments must look forward and anticipate future needs and allocate land for specified purpose several years ahead of schedule.

Land use plans must also embody policies on plot allocations and plot sizes. Care must be taken to ensure that the buildings put up for particular target groups are affordable by them.

155. With the African population now growing at the rate of 3 per cent per annum, the pressure on housing has become very serious. The United Nations guideline on provision of dwellings, proposed a target of ten dwellings per 1000 inhabitants. In Africa it has not been possible to do more than two dwellings per 1000 inhabitants. It is this failure to provide adequate shelter for the urban population, in particular, that has led to the growth of slums in most African cities. A substantial proportion between 30 - 70 per cent of the population cannot afford the conventional low cost housing. 49/

156. Site and service schemes have been tried to help the urban poor produce their own houses. There is also the policy of upgrading the slum areas. Zambia has tried both schemes in Lusaka with some success, although the schemes have slowed down with the current depression.

157. A World Bank group of experts believe that the provision of shelter which is adequate for urban settings and cheap enough for the pockets of the poor is feasible by the use of local materials. 50/

158. Another problem to tackle is the tendency for the capital cities of Africa to loom larger than life, dominating the rest of the country, absorbing enormous quantities of resources, materials, services and revenue. The big cities of Africa, as a result tend to become parasitic. Future human settlement plans must aim at breaking this dominance by developing other medium town which would attract part of the rural-urban influx.

159. The main point of note is that the cities should not be allowed simply to grow anyhow. Advance planning is necessary and it must respond to the purposes that the settlements are expected to serve. 51/

160. The size and scope of the human settlements issue are such that a comprehensive policy on the issue must be developed by the government. It will also be necessary to set up a panel or board to monitor the policy's implementation. Details on plot size and allocation, site layout, activities to be developed on the estate, loan schemes, shelter design, funding sources, procedures for financing, should be worked out later. The selection and preparation of materials for construction should be processed by the same panel, or co-ordinated by it.

161. A great deal of discipline is required in adhering to plans once they are adequately discussed and accepted. Plan implementation must keep pace with demand. Many innovations in design, services and materials will be required to meet the challenge of human settlements in Africa otherwise the cities will be swamped by inevitable squatter settlements and slums.

X. Political and Administrative Systems

162. The relationship between political and administrative systems and the social goals they serve are subjects of frequent comment, especially the extent to which the former may impede the latter. In as far as systems are created to achieve stated goals, these systems should be subject to periodic reviews and necessary adjustments to make them more relevant and functional, to serve these goals.

163. Unfortunately, systems have a way of developing latent functions which may not only preserve the systems in their own right but may actually be a major factor in subverting the very goals they were set up to serve.

164. When such disfunctions arise within micro systems, it is easy to identify them and revamp the systems. But where these systems have grown in size and accummulated powerful vested interests then it is difficult to change them. Cases in point are the Educational and Medical systems in modern societies which may become gradually expensive, and elitist oriented and fail to promote general social development and welfare. It is one reason why reforms to spread the benefits of education and health to more and more of the underprivileged classes run into difficulties.

165. The major political and administrative systems of a country may suffer from similar alienation and need to be reviewed and adjusted from time to time if the development goals of the country are to be fulfilled. One area of frequent comment and attempts at adjustment is provincial or district government. Where there is too much centralization, given the poor communications and perennial scarcity of resources, the districts are often victims of discrimination or neglect.

166. Decentralization is often preached as a way out. It is demonstrably effective. But many attempts at decentralization have been halfhearted. Power is given one way a and taken out the other. Participatory democracy often requires that both the political and administrative machinery be decentralised to allow more people to be involved in decision making, planning, implementation and problem solving close to the scene of action and to the people most affected.

167. The character and functions of many district or village development committees, productivity committees and so on vary from country to country. Effective decentralization depends on having personnel with appropriate training and experience. It also requires personnel who are fully engaged and committed to their locality. If administrative and promotional strings are such that they pull the ablest of them out and back to the capital cities then the arrangements get undermined.

168. Rural development, in particular, has often been a victim of this urban string-pulling. A whole cadre of persons need to be trained for the rural and district functions. Many will need not only management skills in addition to administrative expertise, but also skills in project development and implementation in areas where the infrastructure is underdeveloped.

169. Whether one is operating the local village, district, provincial or national level, it is important to review the structures to ensure that they do not become alienate and self-serving.

XI. Social Services

170. The major social services, healh, education and housing, have been discussed in earlier sections of this report. Certain issues are commone to all of these. The continuing economic crises have impared the ability of public authorities to provide adequate services to the population. Even in times of relative prosperity, developing countries are hard put to it to keep pace with demand.

171. With the current deteriorating conditions and a rapidly expanding population, the number if not the proportion of people left out of the provision of social services will increase. This situation will be further aggravated by the rising costs of the services. Although private voluntary agencies play an important role in providing back-up services, this is still very inadequate.

172. Previous Conferences of African Ministers for Social Affairs have endorsed the view that the orientation of social welfare services should begin to shift emphasis from the curative or remedial to the preventive and developmental. The merger or social welfare and community development departments now widely recommended is expected to assist this orientation. What is aimed at is to eliminate or prevent as far as possible the conditions which put people at risk.

173. But the best organized society cannot completely eliminate circumstances or factors that put people at risk. There are genetic or biological factors, and natural disasters. There are also the man-made problems which are beyond the control of those directly affected. Consequently, society must develop a capacity to cope with the emergencies as they occur. This is the role of social welfare agencies, both governmental and non-governmental.

174. Human needs are many and varied. Hence the range of welfare services is very wide, and the methods and approaches to the provision of such services are highly diversified. On the other hand, human welfare, as such, is indivisible. A person does not perceive himself as units of needs. All are reflections of what promotes his well-being. Therefore welfare provisions must aim at producing a total at least provided in such a way as to cumulatively enhance the welfais of the people.

175. The orientation of welfare services in developing countries is somewhat different from what prevails in developed countries. In the latter, because most basic human needs are already adequately provided for, social welfare services tend to concentrate on the curative and remedial. In developing countries where the basic human needs are poorly met, and a third of the population is at a level of "absolute poverty", a conventional remedial welfare approach really only deals with symptoms. Social welfare targets in developing countries are in reality a high proportion of the people. Therefore a great deal of emphasis needs to be placed on community and group effort to alleviate the basic conditions jeopardising the people's status.

176. Welfare workers in Africa are change agents fundamentally, and their mission is to help people to develop the capacity to deal with their welfare problems in order to improve their quality of life. Basic to all these problems is the fact of poverty itself. It is the basic cause of most of the social ills. But if welfare work is to be treated simply as a bye-product of economic progress, then little progress will be made. A developmental approach to welfare needs to be adopted and implemented. This requires an integrated approach. Welfare services and provisions should be built into the national development programmes. Care must be taken to ensure that these welfare provisions are not smothered within the integrated programmes. When welfare is given prominence in national development plans, it is possible to raise the physical quality of life, as Sri Lanka for example has been able to do, even within the limitations of a low per capita GNP.

177. The training of welfare and community development workers is gradually being oriented to these developmental approaches. What is needed is for governments to recognise the role that welfare programmes can play in development. An effective developmental welfare programme can make significant inputs in development and welfare, and can therefore have direct social, economic and political impact.

178. The proportion of the handicapped - blind, crippled, deaf and dumb, and those suffering from various genetic disabilities - is always high in poor countries. Remedial programmes for such people must be expanded. Taboos and traditional attitudes and practices continue to make life difficult for such people. It is even difficult to estimate their numbers and try to help them because relatives hide them out of a mistaken sense of shame and embarrassment. Sometimes they quietly dispose of them.

179. Although some of the disadvantaged may need special institutionalised care, the majority can be helped to lead near normal lives if only their people and their communities are willing to accept and help them. It is recognised and recommended as the best approach, and it is also cheaper. But attitudes are slow to change. Community education is needed here. Communities could also be encouraged to take care of their less fortunate brethren.

180 Fortunately, in Africa, people still prefer to have their aged relatives with them. Their numbers are small, but with improved health services and better understanding if through education of sanitation and personal hygiene, a substantial percentage increase of old people is expected. An ECA report states: "Decennial percentage increase of those aged 60 years and over, during the 1980 - 2000 period will be approximately 40 per cent in Western Africa, 38 in Northern Africa, 36 in Eastern Africa, and 33 in Central and Southern Africa. More significantly, in absolute numbers, by the year 2000 there will be approximately 11 million persons, 60 years and over, in each of the following regions: Eastern Africa, Northern Africa and Western Africa and about four million in Central Africa and also in Southern Africa". 52/

181 Unfortunately, industrial change and urbanization, drawing many young people to the towns, are tending to leave the old people unattended and sometimes uncared for in the rural areas. This will suggest that some institutional care for the aged will have to be considered especially those who have lost touch with relatives.

African society will have to decide how it wants its aged citizens looked after. Some new approaches should be explored. In the rural areas the village communities could organise to make the care of aged a community responsibility based on a village welfare scheme. In the urban areas the design of houses could incorporate extensions that would suit old people, allowing for both proximity and privacy. Old people's homes should be a last resort.

182. Not many people in Africa give much thought to the problem of growing old. Yet it is an inevitable stage for many people, and hopefully will be for most people when life expectancy increases. In many countries in the region now, the retiring age in the public service is 55 years. A few go on to 60. Yet at that age, many leaders of the developed world are considered comparatively young, certainly young enough to take on responsible and onerous responsibilities. What is required is a programme that will help people make suitable plans for their old age - to cater for living conditions and sustenance, suitable recreation, public service (paid or unpaid) and some less exacting economic activity.

183. A Regional Intergovernmental Meeting on Aging held in Addis Ababa under ECA auspices in March 1982 addressed itself to the problems of the aged and made recommendations regarding areas of particular concern to the aged. These related to the family; health, housing and environment; social welfare; income security; and education. The meeting called for the strengthening of the family, in particular the extended family, with its larger welfare role, and consideration for tax rebates or allowances and grants for those looking after aged relatives. Family life education programmes should inculcate values supportive of the extended family and its aging members. On health, the meeting called for study of environemental conditions affecting the health of old people and the provision of training in geriatrics for health personnel and auxiliary health workers to give better care to the aged. On housing the meeting felt that institutional housing should be discouraged. The aged should have their own housing or stay with relatives. The meeting also called on welfare agencies to study the welfare needs of specific groups of old people in order to make provisions responsive to their particular needs.

184. On income security the meeting proposed the extension of social security schemes to cover rural workers and other workers; the avoidance of discrimination against old people in the operations of the scheme; and the encouragement of non-monetary real income security for the aged. Much of these require education of the general public on the needs of the aged and the development of correct attitudes towards them, and special training to help the aged. Some reeducation programmes to ehlp the aged take on suitable tasks are to be undertaken.

185. Member States of the ECA will be expected to consider these far reaching recommendations and take appropriate action.

186. The general pattern of welfare services is well established but thinly spread in the region, and trained personnel is still lacking. Even where trained personnel are available, the low rating given social welfare and community development personnel by governments leads to job dissatisfaction and some of the most able practitioners then opt for other jobs. To enable social and community workers play their proper role in the Lagos Plan of Action, these nibbling problems must be attended to.

187. Institutions of higher learning now offer various courses for welfare personnel, some even up to the Ph.D. level in Africa. 53/ But appears to be largely restricted to anglophone countries. Francophone countries have been slow in providing higher diploma or degree courses. Although welfare work requires a commitment that makes it more akin to a vocation or a calling, appropriate skills and knowledge can enable welfare staff not only to make better appraisals of the problems but also come out with better plans and projects for assisting those at risk. The time has come when welfare personnel must be trained to see themselves as dynamic change agents and social development practitioners.

XII. Family Welfare

188. The importance of the family as the basic social unit of society has been maintained inspite of erosions due to modern concepts of freedom, individualism and tendencies towards permissiveness and secularisation of social relations. The nuclear family has gained greater recognition in Africa, but the extended family has shown great resilience because its residual functions as an ultimate source of social security and community recognition are still appreciated and needed.

189 In many rural communities, even in some urban areas, the extended family is the custodian of family and ancestral lands. Consequently it still has considerable economic potential. Wealth is both developed and dissipated within the family. A careful and resourceful family unit becomes an asset to the community. Therefore the preservation of the family unit, extended or nuclear, is of importance to all governments. Various factors threaten the integrity of the family unit in the modern context, and governments have to take special measures to safeguard the family. These mainly relate to the protection of wives and children and the provision of services and specific rights to assist them.

190 Laws governing marriage are in a state of confusion where different systems are practised side by side. Legal practitioners may enjoy the problems these pose, especially in mixed marriages, but the confusion can pose serious hardships to helpless men and women and innocent children.

191. Rights in marriage, divorce and widowhood or widowerhood need to be streamlined. Inheritance laws have been a constant source of controversy. Custody of children is another source. Maintenance of spouses and children in and out of wedlock is yet another area. Much anxiety and suffering, and sometimes actual physical harm can be avoided if the laws on these matters are made unequivocal and the public educated on them.

192. The age at marriage has come up from time to time for concerned comment. Many provisions for marriage under statute law stipulate a minimum age for marriage usually 18. But under customary laws and practices, no such age is stipulated. The rights of young people, especially girls, to choose their partners is not clearly defined. Consequently various abuses in child marriage and forced marriages are still prevalent. 54/ Female circumcision is another widespread practice that has come in for sharp criticism and controversy. Although it is condemned on medical grounds, and violates a woman's right to full enjoyment of sex, traditionalists are reluctant to give up the practice.

193. It is true that merely legislating against abuses in this area is not enough. But it is a much needed first step that will strengthen the hands of those who want to protect themselves or others at risk.

194. Some of these proposed legislation will need to be supported by educational programmes. The medical risks to girls involved in early marriage (under 18 years) need to be explained to people. Moreover, it is creating a situation when a young and socially immature girl has to shoulder the responsibilities of a wife and mother.

195. Family life education, as a modern version of advice and information on human sexuality in its biological, social and moral dimensions, and the functions of the family, is very much needed not only for young people but for many adults who through ignorance of the scientific facts and their social implications may give improper guidance to the youth. The rising incidence of adolescent pregnancies, and sexually transmitted diseases has also become a matter of concern. There is still some resistance to the idea of teaching family life education to young people in schools and youth organizations. But such information and guidance must be seen as a human right. Prudery that is uninformed by the realities of modern living is immoral when directed to people at risk.

196. The same applies to family planning. Whether a country's policy regarding its population is pro-natalist or anti-natalist, it is for people who need it to have access to the most up-to-date information on contraceptive methodology, their pros and cons, and have access to a range of approved facilities to enable individuals or couples choose what is best for them if they need them. Family planning is a tool for family welfare that should remove risk and fear from people, so that they are able to have children when they want them, and the numbers they want. Proper child-spacing is demonstrated to be good for the health of the mother as well as the children. It is also known that mothers and their children begin to run various risks if they have children too early, at short intervals, or have more than four children. 55/ Wider public education on the subject is needed for better understanding and appreciation of the issue.

197. Traditions die hard, but traditions that can undermine family welfare should be re-examined. Traditions are valid and sacrosanct in as far as the circumstances that gave rise to them and the values which inspired them are valid or relevant. A commitment to welfare is also a commitment to change and progress. These do not come about if people are inhibited by traditions.

XIII. Women and Development

198. The United Nations Decade for Women provides a tangible time frame within which to assess trends and progress on the situation of women in African countries. Ever since the World and Africa Plans of Action for the Integration of women in Development were formulated, attempts for their implementation have been jeopardized by worsening socio-economic conditions in the region. These have included high fertility levels with concomitant high dependency ratios, serious decreases in food output, high rural-urban migration, slow take off of the industrial and technological development, desertification and drought as well as foreign exchange constraints.

These conditions have necessitated the devising of new emphases, strategies and measures in an effort to bring some lasting solutions to the socio-economic situation of African countries.

199. Both the adverse conditions and the new emphases and strategies have had significant implications on programmes and strategies for African women during the decade. More than ever before, the full participation of women was being advocated and pressed for as essential if the goals of self-reliance and sustainance, accelerated growth and diversification, eradication of mass poverty and unemployment were to be fulfilled. Progressive albeit minimal acceptance and recognition that women were critical rather than marginal to their countries' development and that any restructuring of the socio-economic situation could not be fully achieved without women's contribution, were taking place in a number of countries of the region.

200. In some countries, attempts have been made during the decade to include women in decision-making bodies. In others, however, the socio-cultural rigidities and the political climate remained unreceptive to the inclusion of women in policy-making. Regional and sub-regional structures have been established to support national efforts in promoting the advancement of women. A number of countries have established some kind of national machinery to promote the development planning and implementation of women's programmes.

201. The degree of women's participation in the various socio-economic sectors varies between sectors and from country to country. In education and training there has been some notable increases in the enrollment of girls at the primary and secondary levels. There has also been some progress at the university levels, but women predominate in the arts and social sciences, and very few are found in the technical and scientific fields. Great strides have been made in some countries in reducing the illiteracy rates among women. However, attrition and drop-out rates in education are still higher for female than for male, a phenomenon attributed to a combination of factors such as scarce family resources, early marriages, pre-marital pregnancies, household and farm responsibilities, and gender segregation in curriculum and schools which limit future options for girls.

202. In agriculture and rural development women still predominate in the subsistence economy, particularly in food production. In countries south of the Sahara, an estimated 45.9 per cent of the total rural working population is women. This figure could be higher in some countries considering that African women start working at an early age and continue to be active beyond what is commonly considered as retirement age. Although in some cases, women's contribution to agriculture and rural development is increasingly being recognized, this recognition has not been sufficiently supported by policies and concrete programmes to improve women's work and conditions, to increase productivity. In addition, their participation is still difficult to quantify since existing statistics do not disaggregate data by sex.

203. The Africa Plan of Action on the Integration of Women in Development recognized the major role that women play in rural development and food production and called for the improvement in rural infrastructures to increase the productivity of women's labour. The Lagos Plan of Action, which came at the mid-decade, also

stressed the importance of full utilization of women's potentialities, especially in solving the worsening food crisis. The World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development equally stressed the need to recognize the role of women as a necessary condition for the success of rural development programmes and for increasing food production. Wider access by women to land, education and training, extension services, farm inputs, credit and time and labour-saving technology is essential. Efforts have been made in some countries in this direction, during the United Nations Decade for Women. In other, however, there is great need for stepped-up action.

204. The increasing emphasis on primary and preventive health care in several African countries has had tremendous benefits on women as participants and beneficiaries. Stepped-up training of paramedicals such as health visitors, mid-wives, community health workers, and village mid-wives has increased women's opportunities for training in this field. The efforts of the WHO Regional Office in promoting the active involvement of women in the planning, implementation and monitoring of PHC, through their village-based organizations has given them much needed encouragement in participating in decision-making in matters affecting their destiny and that of their children and communities. Women have been major workers in and beneficiaries of MCH programmes, including family planning and nutrition, in both urban and rural areas. However, major problems in this sector remain to be overcomed. Mortality rates continue to be high, worsening food shortages threaten the health and nutritional conditions of large populations. Limited budgetary allocations militate against widespread provision of health services particularly to rural areas. Women, especially the vulnerable groups — pregnant and lactating mothers — are affected most under these conditions.

205. Available data on labour force participation indicate that an increasing number of women in several countries have been drawn into the labour force during the decade. Statistical data released by UNDP in 1980 revealed that Africa has by far the highest proportion of economically active women. Agriculture still plays a central role in the employment of women, especially in the rural areas. Male migration, civil and inter-country strifes and wars have also resulted in an increase of women who must earn their living and in female-headed households.

206. Women's participation in the employment sector, however, still remain inadequately quantified and available indicators fail to measure a whole range of women's tasks and to categorize them among "economic activities".

207. Wage employment is a sector in which women have been traditionally excluded and are still in the minority. Overall, they are concentrated in the low status jobs and low-paid services. They are rarely found in the managerial and executive positions. Lack of appropriate education and training, opportunities for developing their managerial and administrative skills, social supportive services, their dual roles in the home and on the job and societal and structural rigidities, all affect the status of women in employment.

208. Women are better represented in the informal sector, a factor which could be explained by the fact that jobs there do not require certification, the scale of enterprises is small, and requires simple technology. However, lack of diversification in this sector in some instances affects the marketability of products.

In many West African countries, women predominate in processing, distribution and marketing of food stuffs, clothing and cosmetics. In some cases, what started as small-scale trading has grown into full-fledged merchant enterprises. Regrettably, women's participation in the informal sector is still defined as largely "not classifiable", and government have, hitherto, paid very little attention to the importance of the informal sector in socio-economic development.

209. The Declaration of the United Nations Decade for Women has brought to public attention, to some appreciable degree, the unequal status of women. Consequently, efforts have been made at various levels by African countries, to guarantee women equal rights. Most African countries have enshrined in their constitutions the principles of political, economic, social and civil rights. In theory, the written laws and constitutional provisions do not discriminate against women. It is the practice and implementation of these laws and legislation which are often discriminatory. Cultural beliefs and practices, customs, prejudices, and religious factors have had a high influence on and are a major impediment to effective and positive implementation of statutory laws. In many instances, customary laws regulating the various ethnic groups and civil laws introduced during colonial times, operate side by side. This interrelationship has at times, caused conflicts and controversy and has been held responsible for slowing down the progress of women toward equality before the law.

210. As a result of pressure and lobbying, some countries have enacted and others amended their laws during the decade to give more equality to women. Among the major achievements which women have benefitted from are: paid maternity leave, universal primary education, "positive discrimination" in educational enrollments and minimum age for marriage. Many irregularities, however, still exist in a number of areas, about which much needs to be done to give women equal rights. These include inheritance and property rights, child custody and maintenance, and rights to work without husband's consent, taxation and housing privileges. In some of these cases, laws have not chaged fast enough to keep pace with social, economic and political realities of African countries.

211 Research and dissemination of information on the status of women in African countries have also helped to raise public understanding and attention to the various issues concerning the participation of women in development. During the decade, considerable interest has been shown in the collection of adequate data on women as basis for programme planning and implementation, as well for making a case for women. At national levels, research and publication have been undertaken under the auspices of national machineries on women with the assistance of individual scholars or academic institutions. At the regional level, ECA, through the African Training and Research Centre for Women, has sponsored several research projects on various issues concerning women. Other United Nations agencies and bodies as well as NGOs such as the Association of African Women for Research and Development (AAWORD) have also sponsored and undertaken research on various topics. All these efforts demonstrate the considerable attention the issue of women has gained during the decade, and the need to understand women's situation as it affects and is affected by the development process in African countries.

212. The mass media hss also played a significant role in sensitizing the public to the objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women in African countries. Radio, newspaper and television programmes have introduced a number of items devoted to women and some have popularized special projects for women. Several special publications devoted to women have been initiated in some countries. Inspite of all these positive developments, however, the image of African women in the media leaves much to be desired. The tendency of the media to concentrate on the traditional image of women as housewives, mothers and creatures of beauty, and as passive recipients of social services, rather than as active participants in development still exists in many countries. In some cases, only women in higher positions are featured to the neglect of hard-working women in lower echelons and in the rural areas. This type of potrayal serve to foster in both men and women, negative attitudes towards women's role in society and to re-enforce traditional expectations which confine women to traditional roles.

213. Women form half of the total population. So long as they are denied opportunity for development and advancement, it means half of Africa's population is being underutilized and the loss is to the whole continent. The United Nations Decade for Women has served a very important function of preparing the ground for accelerated action and for a more integrated approach to the issue of women's integration in the development process of African countries. The years following the decade, therefore, should witness more deliberate efforts to translate plans into both short and long term action.

XIV. Youth

214. For statistical and practical purposes, the United Nations defines youth as those persons falling within the age group of 15-24 years. The term youth however is elastic and should be used with some flexibility. In general terms, youth can be categorized as the period in life which forms a bridge between childhood and adulthood with its associated world of work and independence. In many developing countries such a stage rarely exists, and if it does, it is short-lived, since children start to work in their tender ages. In African countries, youth is traditionally considered not so much in terms of their chronological age, but more in physiological maturity and socio-culturally acceptable norms and requirements.

215. Youth as a broad social category constitutes a heterogenous group characterized by its vitality, creativity, receptivity, idealism and at times restlessness. It consists of sub-groups and sub-categories, each with some of its own distinct characteristics and needs. Some of these may however overlap different sub-groups. The broad categories which have been generally recognized include the rural youth, urban youth, in-school youth (students), out-of-school, working youth, unemployed youth, educated youth, uneducated youth, young workers, young women, the handicapped, refugees and migrants. These sub-categories need to be taken into account by each individual country, when identifying priority areas to be addressed in policy formulation and in programme development and implementation.

216. The present total population of African youth represent an estimated 19 per cent of the total population of African countries. Projections for the future indicate that youth will increase to 20 per cent by the end of the century. By comparison, the youth population in Africa has been growing at a faster rate than youth in other parts of the world. This situation has vast socio-economic implications for African countries.

217. Rural youth, a fairly homogenous group, constitute the largest of the sub-categories, and their needs, aspirations, and problems stem largely from the general neglect and object conditions of the rural sector. Urban youth constitute a major element in the ever-increasing flow of rural-urban migration. They are heterogenous and comprise some of the most vulnerable sub-groups such as the new migrants, the unemployed, young women and refugees.

218. The needs, aspirations and problems of youth are deeply rooted in the structure of the society in which they are socialized. The main issues, therefore, relating to youth, should be considered along the lines of the process of socialization of young people, the process through which they are prepared to adopt and adapt to the various characteristics of their culture; the attitudes, knowledge and skills which are necessary for a responsible role in their socio-cultural environment, as well as their meaningful contribution to the socio-economic development of their communities, countries and mankind in general, and their own self-reliance.

219. In traditional African societies, the family and all its extended members, as well as the whole village community, played a very significant role in the socialization and formation of youth, along culturally prescribed and acceptable norms, with clearly defined goals. Indeed, passage rites were (and still are in some places) performed to mark the end of youth and the beginning of adulthood. This system provided youth of a given community, with the needed social and psychological stability and a sense of belonging in a cohesive socio-culturally environment. Over the years, however, the African family and social systems have been undergoing some transformation with both positive and negative results. Exposure to the outside world with all its new knowledge, technologies, communications systems, and other new infrastructures, inspite of its many positive developments, has gradually weakened and eroded the traditional authority of the African family system. Schooling, urbanization and new types of peer groups have introduced new demensions in the socialization of youth, and as a result have replaced some elements of the traditional educational system, and consequently introduced new values and attitudes in African youth. This situation has at times created what is known as the "generation gap" between youth attracted to a different way of life and the their elders who still place more value on traditional life. Some of the problems attendant with the onset of adolescence arise out of the failure to close this generation gap.

220. Relevant and adequate education and training are among the crucial needs of youth, for their meaningful participation in the development process of their countries. Since independence, African governments have made considerable efforts and have devoted major proportion of their budgets to the expansion of educational and training opportunities, particularly at the primaryand secondary levels. A number of countries have attained compulsory universal primary education. All these efforts have resulted in significant quantitative increases in school enrolments and outputs. Inspite of all these achievements however, the results have fallen short of expectations. High rates of increases in the school-age population has outstripped the capacity of many governments to provide adequate resources and facilities. The problems of quality and relevance have proved difficult to overcome, inspite of attempts to revise curricula. This situation has had limited success in improving the preparation of the majority of school leavers for productive life.

221. Both the rapid expansion in the numbers of school leavers and the failure of the educational and training systems to equip youth with sufficient and employable skills have combined to produce an increasing number of unemployed and underemployed school leavers. In the past, unemployment was more widespread among primary school leavers. A recent phenomenon, however, consists of the gradual shifting of the qualification frontier. Secondary school leavers are increasingly being affected by unemployment. In the near future university graduates are likely to fall into the ranks of the unemployed.

222. Underemployment affects mostly rural youth. This is one of the major causes of the high rate of rural-urban migration among youth, in search for better opportunities which are hard to come by. In most African countries, the urban labour force has grown at impressive rates and competition for jobs is getting stiffer. Yet this increase is not being matched by the number of jobs created in the formal sector, due mainly to the sluggish performance of the overall and sectoral economy. AS more young people leave school and as both the school leavers and unschooled leave the rural areas for the urban centres, the problem of youth unemployment and underemployment becomes acute. In the absence of economic means to support themselves and of familial and social supportive systems, urban youth do easily fall into such traps as drugs, alcohol, unwanted pregnancies and abortion, prostitution, environmental hazards, and lack of basic needs including adequate diet, clothing and shelter.

223. Both underemployment and unemployment are deeply rooted in the general socio-economic situation of each individual country. Youth unemployment and underemployment, therefore, cannot be solved through simple, isolated and palliative remedies. Solutions must be sought within the overall efforts to restructure existing socio-economic systems.

224. Given the limited capacity of governmental, industrial and private sectors to provide adequate employment opportunities to the growing numbers of youth, other alternatives must be sought. The informal sector offers some future possibilities. At present, however, this sector also has its limitations.

225. Its slow growth and diversification limit its capacity to absorb a substantial number of surplus labour. Apprenticeship programmes are limited and out of reach of many young people, and the end product may not always correspond to the requirements of the labour market. Self-employment requires initiative, perseverance, some skills and capital, and most young people do not have the training or experience in the management of their own enterprises. The limited or no attention given by policy makers to the informal sector and its poor linkages to the rest of the economy militate against its rapid expansion. Future employment prospects for young people in this sector, therefore, can only be enhanced if all these stumbling blocks are removed.

226. Cheap ways of providing vocational and employment-oriented training should be devised to cater to the vast numbers of school leavers. More important however, this training should correspond to available opportunities in the labour market. A corresponding restructuring of school curricula must be stepped up for the purpose of giving more room for a practical education which imparts in youth not only the relevant skills but also the right and positive attitude and more realistic aspirations. Literacy and practical vocational training for rural youth is necessary for the objective of providing them with the type of skills and

incentives needed in rural areas. However, provision of appropriate and relevant training alone does not suffice. Facilities to help young people get and choose suitable jobs should be made available through appropriate counselling and guidance.

227. As future leaders of African countries, youth should also be provided with the opportunity for training in citizenship, leadership and patriotism. Several countries provide such training through national service programme, political and civic education. There is need, however, to redefine the objectives and to evaluate the end results of such programmes in order to bring them more in line with changing socio-economic conditions and the increasing need and problems of youth.

228. The needs of young people also include the opportunity for self-expression in sports, games, cultural activities, adventure as well as religious ceremonies. These are necessary not only for their physical health, but for the stimulation of their intellectual, moral and ethical growth and creativity, as outlets for their energy and frustration, and as means to combat boredom and divert them from anti-social behaviour. Traditional societies were replete with such opportunities. Unfortunately many of these have been replaced by modern facilities and some of them have been completely lost. As a result many young people, particularly those in the rural and poor urban areas are cut off from creative and meaningful out-door activities. Present efforts by some countries to revive some of the traditional games, dances, sports and ceremonies are commendable.

229. Mobilization of both rural and urban youth for effective participation in development can be achieved only if the majority of youth see themselves as benefitting from the efforts of development, not as mere spectators, but as active participants in its planning and implementation. While some of the growing social and economic problems of today and recent past can be blamed on such climatic and natural calamities as drought, floods, and earthquakes, many of them emanate from human errors and failure. The responsibility for immediate and short-term solutions to Africa's present problems of food shortages, a weak industrial and technological base, insufficient trained manpower, external debts and balance of payments, lies mainly in the hands of today's adults. However, future, future, continued and long-term success in the policies of self-reliance, self-sustainment, effective interaction of human, capital and natural resources, and the full attainment of subregional and regional co-operation lies in the hands of future planners and policy-makers. These are today's youth! This fact cannot be ignored in present planning and policy formulation if similar mistakes are to be avoided in the future. In other words, Africa's long-term development and the enjoyment of the fruits of that development, within the framework of the Lagos Plan of Action, and the Final Act of Lagos, will for the most part be achieved by today's Africa's youth who must be involved from the start.

XV. Refugees and Displaced Persons

230. From the days of the independence struggle in Africa in the 1950's the mass movement of refugees accross national frontiers has remained a permanent feature of the social landscape in Africa. With the accession of independence by most African countries, many of the early refugees returned to their original homes. However, other problems have occasioned other waves of refugees, and the majority of these have tended to stay on because the factors that caused their emigration have not yet been resolved.

231. A refugee is defined as a person who is outside his former home country owing to well founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality or political opinion. The mass movement of people compelled a more elastic definition of the concept as well as of vetting procedures which had originally been conducted on individual basis.

232. A number of meetings and conventions held in the 1960's involving OAU, UNHCR and ECA have established the protocols for dealing with refugees in Africa. A total of some 1.5 million refugees have been successfully aided to return of their own free will to their countries of origin. However, the refugee problem has since grown more complex and serious. In 1970 there were 750,000 refugees in Africa. By 1980 the figure had risen to five million. But the latest estimate by the UNHCR Regional Office for Africa gives a figure of 3.5 million refugees in Africa. The factors behind the growing number of refugees are well known. These are victims of inter-national conflict, civil strife, racial and ethnic persecution, political dissent, social injustice. Some are victims of natural calamities. Majority of these refugees are women and children and the aged. (See Table 4).

233. All these refugees have been uprooted from their homes and their people and have sought refuge in another country. Most of them move to neighbouring countries if they feel safe there. The majority of refugees travel light - without choice. Many arrive with hardly anything. The physical and mental agony that some have to go through is extreme. But a refugee, once recognised as such is in a relatively safe place - temporarily. Fortunately, African governments have invariably welcomed refugees with a deep understanding of the vagaries of fate, and a compassion for humanity.

234. Refugees come with many problems of their own. They have moved away from one situation to another. They have lost everything. They have their hopes and expectations, however, and their responses within their new homes are often determined by these expectations. But refugees also pose problems. As they move in large numbers and often quite suddenly, emergency provisions have to be made for them. Provisions for food, water, shelter, health and clothing are immediate concerns. But as their stay extends from months to years, long-term provisions have to be made for them. Unfortunately, most of them are in countries which are themselves poor, and the strain of sustaining them becomes severe.

235. The enormous costs of maintaining refugees are borne by the countries of assylum with assistance from the UNHCR and other philanthropic organizations and donors. Finding the funds to look after the refugees has been a major problem. Ancillary to the refugee problem is the fact that they often live near other needy people, who are not always able to get the facilities enjoyed by the refugees. This sometimes leads to some resentment, but fortunately this is not widespread. There is a genuine sympathy for refugees. But for how long can the countries of assylum harbour these refugees? This poses serious and political problems.

236. Some refugees manage to move on to other countries with the help of UNHCR and other agencies. But the majority cannot be moved. Other refugees have been settled reasonably in their host countries. Refugees often face serious psychological problems. Most hope to return to their countries of origin, but as events seem to indicate that this may not happen soon, they become frustrated, and then indifferent to what goes on round them. It is an unfortunate syndrome. Some are known to take to heavy drinking.

Table 4.[56] REFUGEES IN AFRICAN COUNTRIES

Location	No. of Refugees	Location	No. of Refugees
Algeria	167,000	Morocco	500
Angola	99,000	Mozambique	600
Botswana	4,200	Nigeria	4,600
Burunid	256,000	Rwanda	49,500
Cameroon	4,300	Senegal	5,200
Central African Rep.	6,800	Somalia	700,000
Djibout (Rep. of)	23,000	Sudan	699,700
Egypt (Arab Rep. of)	5,500	Swaziland	7,000
Ethiopia	46,800	Tanzania (United Republic of)	180,000
Kenya	7,300	Togo	1,500
Lesotho	11,500	Uganda	173,000
		Zaire (Rep.of)	293,500
		Zambia	103,000
		Zimbabwe	60,400

237. Refugees represent human tragedy. Whatever help is given them, the only real solution is to get them back where they came from if they so wish. For some the choice is possible. The cessation of hostilities in Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe, made it possible for thousands of refugees to return home. Ultimately, only peace and social justice will resolve the problem of refugees. Efforts to end the conflicts on the continent should therefore be redoubled. The OAU is fully seized of the problem, and has shown much concern. It will require considerable diplomatic skill, and a general lessening of national and international conflict in Africa to resolve the problem.

238. In 1979 a conference sponsored by UNHCR, OAU and UNECA was convened in Arusha, Tanzania to review the situation of refugees in Africa, to evaluate progress made so far in rehabilitating them, to consider the administrative, institutional and financial aspects of dealing with the problem, to review the status and legal provisions concerning refugees and propose improvements. The conference acknowledged that the refugee problem in Africa was an African problem, and proceeded to exhaustively examine and revise the protocols and legislative provisions for the treatment and protection of refugees. This was followed by another International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa held in Geneva in April 1981.

239. The upshot of these two conferences was to give considerable publicity to the growing problem of refugees and to solicit funds for helping them. A provisional total of US$560 million was pledged. The major donors were the United States of America ($283.4 million) the European Economic Community ($68 million), the Federal Republic of Germany ($42.9 million), Japan ($33 million) and Saudi Arabia ($30 million).

240. Programmes to help refugees are organized by UNHCR and a host of voluntary organizations. Many programmes are provided - scholarships to train in schools, universities, vocational training, self-help projects, etc. The placement of rural refugees has been relatively easy. Urban refugees, however, present a different set of problems because of the tight employment situation and the higher cost of maintenance in the towns.

CONCLUSION

241. The review of the social conditions and trends over the past decade, and especially over the past four years, gives cause to much alarm and dismay. As a result of the rapid escalation of the socio-economic crisis, Africa finds itself in the grip of a human tragedy and social and economic difficulties of unprecedented propositions. Serious losses of human life, widespread famine and hunger, increased malnutrition and diseases and massive displacement of populations have become the order of the day. The rapidly deteriorating economic conditions have also caused serious set backs to any hopes for progress in the social situation and the social wel being of the majority of Africans. Almost every indicator of social wellbeing has shown a highly disturbing trend. The problems of the refugees and displaced persons have intensified and cases of instability, crimes and juvenille delinquency have been on the rise. Overall, the impact of the current economic and social crisis on African countries has been so severe to the extent that for many of those countries, the main issue at stake has not been one of economic and social development, but one of sheer survival. The implications of such a situation on the social conditions and social prospects of millions of Africans have been very devastating indeed.

242. As ECA's Preliminary perspective study has shown, a continuation of the current historical trends will only lead to a "scenario that is almost a nightmare" where conditions in Africa by the turn of the Century would be characterized by unacceptable levels of extreme poverty, unemployment, food shortages; increased crime rates, misery and instability' and "a degradation of the very essence of human dignity" in general.

243. Such a horrendous future must be avoided at all cost and a concerted approach is urgently needed to deal with the immediate aspects of the socio-economic crisis as well as to implement the structural changes that are needed to bring about genuine socio-economic development and transform Africa from its present dependent situation to a fully self-sustained economic community on the basis of individual and collective self-reliance and self-sustenance, and effective sub-regional and regional cooperation as enunciated in the Lagos Plan of Action.

244. The severity of the economic and social crisis has prompted African countries to deal seriously with the emergency situation. The international community has also provided additional contributions, over and above its regular activities, to assist African countries with the emergency needs. Given the magnitude and gravity of the situation, such international support will need to be intensified and sustained in a concerted manner. Many African countries have also stated to address themselves to the underlying long-term problems of their economies. However, what is needed is total political commitment to the implementation of the necessary changes. In adopting the Lagos Plan of Action and the final act of Lagos, African countries are clearly signalling a break with the past policies. Already, many countries are beginning to incorporate the recommendations of the Lagos Plan of Action in their national development programmes. If these recommendations are pursued with the care and determination they deserve, there will be room for optimism. The implications of these new strategies are far-reaching, and will call forth careful planning and execution. Breaking away from past economic dependence and structures will not be easy. How to make the shift from a dependent economy to a largely autonomous, self-sustaining regional economy is a challenge to Africa. It will involve extensive structural, political, economic, social and psycological adjustments all over the region. As the so-called North-South Dialogue drags along without significant concessions, the need for action on other fronts becomes urgent.

245. Since the root causes of Africa's socio-economic plight are due in part to the excessive outward orientation of the African economies, the colonial legacies and the rapid deterioration in the international economic environment and while the primarily responsibility for the restructuring the African economies rests with the African peoples and governments, this task would not be successful without major improvements in the international economic environment and the implementation of the New International Economic Order. The international community has thus a major moral responsibility for creating the favourable conditions that are necessary for Africa's sustained and accelerated socio-economic development.

Table 5 57/

FOOD AND WATER

Per Capita calorie supply as % requirements (PCC) and total with access to safe water

Country	1981 a/ % PCC	1980 c/ Urban		Rural
Algeria	[illegible]		77 d/	
Angola	83	85		10
Benin	101	26		15
Botswana	90 a/	-		-
Burkina Faso	95	27		31
Burundi	95	90		20
Cape Verde	133 a/	-		-
Central African Republic	96		16 d/	
Chad	76		26 d/	
Comoros	-	-		-
Congo	94	40		3
Djibouti	-	-		-
Egypt	116	88		64
Equatorial Guinea	-			-
Ethiopia	76	35		5
Gabon	102 a/			
Gambia	97 a/	-		-
Ghana	88	72		33
Guinea	75	69		2
Guinea-Bissau		[illegible]		[illegible]
Ivory Coast	112		19 d/	
Kenya	88	85		15
Lesotho	111	37		11
Liberia	114		20 d/	
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	147	100		90
Madagascar	109		25 d/	
Malawi	94	77		37
Mali	72	37		0
Mauritania	97	80		85
Mauritius	122 a/	100		98
Morocco	115	100		-
Mozambique	70	-		-
Niger	102	41		32
Nigeria	91	58		13
Rwanda	[illegible]	[illegible]		55
Sao Tome and Principe		-		
Senegal	101	77		25
Seychelles	-	-		-
Sierra Leone	101	50		2
Somalia	100	20		42
Sudan	99		40 d/	
Swaziland	97 a/	-		-

Table 5 (Cont'd.)

Country	1981 b/ [illegible] PCC	1983 c/ [illegible]		
		Urban		Rural
Togo	63	70		31
Tunisia	111	100		17
Uganda	56		35 d/	
United Republic of Cameroon	102	45		41
United Republic of Tanzania	83	65		41
Zaire	94		16 d/	
Zambia	93		42 d/	
Zimbabwe	90	-		10

FOOTNOTES

1. For a detailed analysis of the crisis and its implications see: Special Memorandum by the ECA Conference of Ministers on Africa's Economic and Social Crisis, E/ECA/CM.10/37/Rev.2, July 1984

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STRATEGIES AND ACTION PROGRAMMES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE LAGOS PLAN OF ACTION

STRATEGIES AND ACTION PROGRAMMES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE LAGOS PLAN OF ACTION

Introduction

1. Resolution 423 (XIV) adopted by the Conference of Ministers at its seventh meeting, recognizes the important role of the Conference of African Ministers of Social Affairs in implementation of the Monrovia Strategy for the development of African and urges member States to report to the fourth session of the Conference of African Ministers of Social Affairs on actions taken to implement the recommendations pertaining to the social implications of the Lagos Plan of Action.

2. The resolution further urges member States to give particular consideration to the adoption and implementation of the following measures:

(a) Measures to improve the demographic and health situation;

(b) Measures to improve the quality of human resources;

(c) Measures to improve the status of women and increase their opportunities for involvement in national development efforts;

(d) Measures to deal with problems of youth unemployment;

(e) Measures to deal with the problems of refugees and displaced persons;

(f) Social policy measures to be taken in anticipation of adverse social consequences of the implementation of the Lagos Plan of Action;

(g) International co-operation in social development

3. This paper is intended to look at the problems involved and to review the efforts that need to be made for the effective implementation of those measures, due consideration being given to the fact that, although such measures are defined separately, the actions they entail are closely interrelated when they are not inter-twined.

A. ACTIONS TO AMELIORATE THE DEMOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS

4. One of the major difficulties encountered in providing needed services to populations is the remarkable lack of data on the population size, and its distribution by age, sex and other socio-economic characteristics such as household income, educational attainment, employment status, etc. ... Equally problematic is the lack of reliable data on the epidemiology of major debilitating and killer diseases - specific-morbidity and mortality rates, age-sex specific morbidity and mortality rates by cause. Without such data the planning and implementation of intervention programmes become extremely difficult if not altogether impossible. Without such data the probability that resources may be misdirected and/or misallocated is high.

5. The availability of demographic data, is vital for development planning. The African Ministers of Education meeting in Harare (Zimbabwe) from 28 June to 3 July 1983, attributed the failure to attain universal primary education goals by 1980 in accordance with the Addis Ababa plan of 1961, among other factors, to " ... higher rate of population growth and an initial underestimate of the actual population of Africa". 1/

6. Accurate data on such variables as school enrolment ratios (by level), the ratio of the active to total population, the proportion of the active population in the formal sector, the number and distribution of health establishments and facilities (eg. number and distribution of hospitals, health centres, doctors, nurses, etc.), the number of existing and required housing units, vital statistics, etc., are not readily available to planners.

7. It is not surprising, therefore, that given such paucity of data, inaccurate projections are made, resources are misdirected and, in short, many governments are caught unprepared. As a result, economic and social indicators have, by and large, become matters of prestige and hence matters for political decision. As the saying goes: "He who does not reveal his disease will not find remedies". This situation of planning in a data vacuum should not be permitted to continue. Besides, education data constraints also affect health planning, provision of housing, urban-rural development, and the labour force needed to implement development plans to mention a few.

8. In view of the above, the following actions are recommended:

AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

(a) Governments should establish simple nationwide systems of population registration in order to improve the demographic data situation. In this regard, emphasis should be put on matters concerning education, health, housing, urban-rural development, and labour force participation.

(b) While the format must be developed by a suitable central body, it must be simple enough to be handled by persons with no sophisticated education . For example, where there are problems in establishing death registers on the grounds that doctors are scarce and therefore difficulties are encountered in determining the cause of death, the problem can be dealt with by entering, in the cause of death column, symptoms as friends and relatives observed them. Then, periodically a team of medical personnel can examine thes symptoms on representative samples of localities and determine the major causes of death by relating incidences with the kind of diseases the given environment is likely to host.

(c) The maintenance of such registers should be the responsiblity of local councils, municipalities, etc, and such councils and municipalities must be given to understand that this is an integral part of their responsibilities.

(d) Persons responsible for population registers must be given short but intensive training on recording information on various variables, focusing specifically on the importance of such work for national development, the mechanics of using the register and reporting requirements.

(e) To the extent resources permit, central statistics offices should spearhead periodic studies through national smples surveys, household sample surveys, etc. ... to establish trends in population dynamics and other economic and social situations such as income, labour force participation statutes, average number of months worked by an adult per year, agricultural production per capita and family expenditure patterns. Such studies should be designed and supervised by an interdisciplinary team of university faculty members from Economics, Sociology, Agriculture, Statistics, Psychology, etc. ... Students from these departments should be used in field work within the context of either block field placements where this can be arranged, or during long vacations.

(f) Each country should make increased efforts at building up capacities for demographic data collection and analysis, and for conducting effective household surveys, by seeking assistance from such agencies as the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, IPPF, etc. ...

(g) Each country should underake studies on the effects of current birth rates on the age structure of the population, and the extent to which the resultant age structure affects the population - resource equilibrium and the effects of this on productivity and the general well-being of the population.

(h) On the basis of such empirical dtermination, each country should develop a population policy that takes into account cultural, social and political values and sensitivities.

(i) Establish service delivery systemsin population related matters with multiple dimensions including conception control service, information and education in matters pertaining to the relationships between population dynamics and individual welfare, population dynamics and family welfare and population dynamics and efforts in nation-building. Such services should specifically address themselves to risk groups such as adolescents and women who are 35 years and over and women with high paityto reduce maternal mortality rates and the incidence of congenital malformation, high foetal and infant deaths rates among such women.

(j) When designing population policies, a key consideration should be the goal specification: what rate of change in the population growth rate is anticipated during the plan, and what are the expected levels in the growth components consistent with the overall desired growth rate. Having specified the goal, the cost of such means must then be estimated in both human and material terms. A key desideratum of such policies should have built-in mechanisms for evaluation of performances.

(k) In formulating such population policies, member States should utilize the findings of all demographic research of national interest, particularly in ascertaining the correlates of fertility and mortality declines. Such analysis should be undertaken regularly as better data become available.

(l) Regarding population data collection and research, member States should continue taking advantage of existing national and/or multinational institutes for demographic training and research, in order to increase the potential of nationals from these States to perform their data collection duties.

(m) Member States should undertake periodic population projections in the light of improved data quality. Analysis of the implications of these projections should provide useful guides and inputs into the development plans of the member States.

AT THE REGIONAL/SUB-REGIONAL LEVEL

9. While action programmes must be essentially planned and implemented at the national level, countries can benefit from regional and sub-regional co-operation in the following areas:

(a) Exchange of information and experiences

The inadequacy of data gathering and analyzing capacity has been and continues to be one of the submbling blocks to proper planning, programme development and programme implementation processes in the region. But countries vary in the degree of seriousness which they attach to solving these problems. It must be assumed that some countries are more successful than others in improving this capacity by tapping various sources of external assistance and by establishing a system which permits the mobilization and analyses of basic demographic and socio-economic data. United Nations as well as government officials have been developing strategies for better mobilization of demographic data. 2/ Facilitating exchange of information and experiences among countries by such means as study tours, seminars, workshops, etc. ... will contribute significantly to the improvement of any data generating capacities of member States.

(b) More effective utilization of existing population training and research institutions for the improvement of manpower capacities of member States

(i) The Regional Institute of Population Studies at Legon, Accra, and the Institut de Formation et de Recherche Demographiques, Yaounde, are well established institutions of population studies in the region. The contribution of these institutions can be considerably enhanced if it is expanded in scope to include among others things such services as: (1) short-term training courses in the form of workshops for those responsible for the collection of vital statistics, employment/unemployment data, trends in urbanization and their effects on social well-being, etc. ... and funds should be established to make it possible for more countries to make use of such facilities, (2) providing consultancy services with a view to assisting member countries establish and strengthen the national training research capabilities in the field of population and related areas.

(ii) Other institutions at subregional levels must be provided with needed funds and facilities to undertake similar services.

B. ACTIONS TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEMS OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT

10. The problems of urban unemployment and rural underemployment have assumed serious proportions in almost all African countries. With the expansion of secondary level education in the post independence decades, increasing number of youngsters are leaving secondary school with limited prospects for gainful employment. In all African countries, the modern sector is so limited in size that its capacity to absorb additional entrants is negligible. Government bureaucracies and the service sector in general, which are the traditional source of employment for the educated persons are already saturated. Until such time as the rate of structural differentiation in the economy reaches such a level as to ensure greater labor absorption capacity, goverements must rely, for new employment opportunities, on the agriculture sector, 3/ and in small-scale manufacturing and on the distribution sector. What has been said about the urban economy in 1971 still holds true in 1984 except, perhaps, for a few oil producing countries. The writers of Africa's Strategy for Development in the 1970s noted that "... the structure and rate of growth of the urban economy are at present incapable of ensuring adequate employment and higher living standards for its growing population." 4/ In spite of the heavy concentration of the active population in the agricultural sector, agriculture remains to be a major resource the potentials of which are barely exploited. This is a sector which receives scant policy attention and one that is assidously avoided by people of any degree of education as a source of career. The development of agriculture must be sought both as a spring board for development in other sectors and as a means of alleviating the current problems of urban unemployment and rural underemployment. This, in fact, must be viewed as a strategy for rural transformation. Rural transformation can hardly be expected to take place unless a new blood is infused into the system. In a number of countries both in Africa and elsewhere sporadic attempts are made to send young people back to the villages and often by employing authoritarian methods and the result has been, in most cases, dismal failure. There is a situation where the new generation of planners and policy makers should benefit from the lessons of history and avoid past mistakes. To increase the probability of success for the renewed attempt to develop agriculture both as a source of employment and as a spring board for development in other sectors, certain favourable conditions must be provided:

(a) People should not be forced into a career against their will;

(b) The reverse movement of people from urban to rural areas should not result in the displacement of people who are already there.

(c) Planners and policy makers should not labour under the illusion that young people are full of dynamism and a high sense of adventure and, therefore, will rough it up from a sense of heroism. It is abundantly clear that, by and large, African youth, as youth everywhere, lack the pioneering spirit, and that it is important that they should not be thrown into the lake to sink or swim. If past experience is anything to go by, most of them will swim back to where they started.

(d) Attempts should be made to minimize unnecessary hardship and, to this end, reasonable shelters, the supply of basic goods and services, adequate technical supervision and support in the areas of production, credit, marketing, and equipment must be provided.

(e) Because of the complexity of the problem of relocating people with urban biases, it is important that people should be screened carefully and that initially the programmes should be undertaken on an experimental basis, preferably under a variety of conditions, before nationwide replication.

11. It is a well-known fact that the service sector in a great number of African countries is manned by persons from outside the continent. In spite of declarations on the imperatives of Africanization, outsiders are preferred resulting in the perpetuation of the myth that essential services will collapse without them. This, of course, is a self-fulfilling prophecy, because, since no plan is usually made for their replacement, service collapse upon their departure. Clearly ther is no lack of employment opportunities in Africa.

12. To alleviate the problems of unemployment in the urban sector, a number of measures suggest themselves.

(a) Increase the vocational and technical content in secondary level curricula.

(b) Establish a network of vocational/technical training institutions to train the large number of out-of-school youths in such fields as automechanics, building and construction technology, electrical work, masonry, carpentry, maintenance of electronic equipment, etc.... and the production of handicrafts, etc....

(c) Establish easy-term credit facilities to help graduates of such institutions get started in business either individually or in a cooperative structure.

(d) Ensure viability of such enterprises by government giving them preferential treatment in the purchase of their services, and provide training facilities to enable these persons to perform in accordance with standards to be specified in city ordinances and other suitable forms of publishing minimum standards requirements.

(e) Encourage the establishment of small-scale business in the distribution sector so that people will be able to engage in self-employment. The attainment of this goal can be facilitated by establishing national, provincial and city level agencies whose responsibilities will be to assist those interested in small business through feasibility determintion, credit facilities and technical supervision.

C. ACTION PROGRAMMES TO ENHANCE THE CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN TO NATION BUILDING

13. The elaboration of forward-looking strategies for the advancement of African women beyond the United Nations Decade for Women is a necessary factor in providing a focus and priority base for the acceleration of the integration of women in the development process of African countries. These strategies are essential in the implementation, review and appraisal of the Lagos Plan of Action as well as other development strategies affecting Africa, such as the Regional Food Plan, the Industrial Development Decade for Africa, the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action

on population and self-reliant development, the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, and the North-South Dialogue. The full participation of women in national, sub-regional and regional institutions responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Lagos Plan of Action and other strategies, is a great asset which the region should fully utilize.

Agriculture and food production

14. Over the past two decades, the food and agricultural situation in most parts of Africa has undergone drastic deterioration, manifested in poor productivity in the sector, falling per capita consumption of food, and increasing unemployment, malnutrition, leading to starvation and death threatening millions of people in sub-Saharan Africa. The weak technical position of women in agricultural production, even though they are the major producers of food in subsistence economies, is a major contributory factor to the present unsatisfactory situation.

15. In this connection, the following strategies require careful consideration:

(a) Integrated approach through national policies diversified according to the conditions of each country, and the full involvement of women in this approach;

(b) Improvement of basic rural infrastructures to alleviate the burdens of women;

(c) Dissemination of information to rural women and communities and the involvement of women in information exchange among developing countries,

(d) Utilization of a combination of traditional know-how and improved technology appropriate for local needs and customs. Avoidance of indiscriminate reproduction of patterns of imported divisions of labour which emphasize specialization in certain agricultural practices and stages, thus eliminating the possibilities of development and innovation in other areas.

(e) Improvement of women's educational and training opportunities in diversified fields relevant to agriculture and food production, including scientific and technological innovations;

(f) Improvement of women's access to productive factors such as land, capital and services.

Industrial development in Africa

16. National industrial strategies in African countries, have provided few employment opportunities for women. Lack of appropriate education and training have kept women in low-skilled and unstable jobs in industrial enterprises. Labour legislation, discriminatory practices by employers, the nature of work and working conditions in some industrial plants, as well as societal and women's attitudes to certain occupations, have all inhibited the full contribution of women to industrial development. It is, therefore, appropriate to evolve strategies along the following lines:

(a) Industrial policy should include the needs and concerns of women as an integral part of national planning and development.

(b) Financial resources and subsidy should be provided to industries run by women and those employing a high percentage of women.

(c) Necessary institutional mechinery or operational focal points should be promoted for the increased involvement of women in industrial policy-making.

(d) Opportunities for technical and skilled training of women and advancement to better and higher-level positions should be accorded high priority in national manpower development.

(e) Studies should be undertaken to identify linkages between the modern and informal sectors with the objectives of strengthening these linkages. Alternative work arrangements, benefits and services should be explored to increase women workers's productivity and to reduce gender-differentiated labour costs.

(f) TCDC in industrial development should be stepped up and should cover small enterprises run by women.

Human resources development

17. Human resources development policies and practices in African countries have not been particularly successful in equipping women with the required and relevant skills for soci-economic development. Sex bias in education and training has put women at a disadvantage and has worked against their effective contribution to the development process of their countries. Actions along the following lines should therefore be considered:

(a) Introduction of compulsory and free education at the primary and secondary levels, and positive discrimination at the tertiary level, to ensure more places for girls,

(b) The removal, in educational institutions and curricula, of sex-biased elements which introduce or consolidate gender discrimination in schools;

(c) Wider inclusion of science and mathematics and other technical subjects in school curricula, and increased admission of girls in these streams;

(d) Design of special measures for reducing the high drop-out rates among girls;

(e) Design and introduction of appropriate culturally acceptable sex education in order to combat adoleseent pregnancies and wider introduction of special skill-training programmes for school leavers and dropouts,

(f) Provision of guidance, counselling and services on educational and related employment opportunities.

Women, health and population

18. Major problems in health and population remain to be overcome in most African countries. Birth and mortality rates continue to be high. Worsening food shortages threaten the health and nutritional conditions of large populations. Health receives a minor share of the national budget and this prevents the widespread provision of health services to rural areas. As women are among the most vulnerable groups and are, therefore, likely to suffer most under advers conditions, the following requires particular attention:

(a) Governments should undertake concrete programmes in maternal and child health care based on the WHO Health for all by the Year 2000, and women should be involved in the delivery of public health care services on a wider scale,

(b) Measures should be taken to reduce the rate of infant and maternal mortality and to extend the very low life expectation of African women.

(c) Programmes should be developed to meet the particular needs of handicapped women,

(d) Governments should recognize the importance of demographic variables in development planning with particular attention to the development of national population policies. Free family planning information and services should be made available to women, especially in rural areas.

D. EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR THE YOUNG

19. The future of any country lies in the hands of its youth. This future will be brighter or darker depending on how the young are handled and prepared for their future role.

20. As in all developing countries, young people in African countries from the single largeitage group. Therefore, it is a group that needs the utmost attention.

21. If young people are to be useful to their society, that society must invest in them to begin with. Young people have to be prepared for their future roles.

22. Hence, first and foremost, young people must be educated. The educational system young people have to go through must be designed in such a manner that it prepares them for active and useful life. Education must be relevant to the country's needs and what young people are expected to do later on in life.

23. Many African countries expect most of those who complete primary education and those who drop out of either the primary or secondary levels of education to be absorbed back into traditional family occupations. Almost 85 percent of the population in Africa live on agriculture and small scale handicrafts. Yet, the curricula in many African countries have, for long, neglected or have given the least priority to these areas. Young people with no better knowledge of agriculture than their traditional parents can hardly introduce any kind of innovation. On the other hand, unless the labour absorptive

capacity of agriculture is improved, the intention of keeping young people in the rural areas would be a futile exercise. To increase the absorption capacity of agriculture is to improve it. The development of large number of professionals to train farmers should be the first step. In addition, if school curricular expose young people to agriculture and animal husbandry, the task of these professionals will be easier. The curricula should also include education aimed at improving technical capacities of young people. Therefore, the purpose of education in Africa should not aim only at increasing enrollment ratios or achieve universal primary education, but should also make it possible for those who cannot go beyond the primary level to be gainfully employed and earn a living. This can happen only if the curricula are made functional.

24. At the same time, attempts should be made to inculcate work ethics in youthful minds by making productive work part of the educational process. Arrangement should be made with government, parastatal and private services in order to enable students to acquire practical experience while they are learning. This will not only enable young people to acquire practical experiences and enable them to relate their education to work conditions, but will also help them make preliminary decisions on their future careers.

25. On the other hand, the increasing number of out-of-school youth should not be overlooked. In a situation where the enrolment ratio is not catching up with the population growth rate, a large number of young people are likely to be left out of the school system. In addition, a substantial number dropsout of the school system, thus increasing the unemployment and underemployment rates. This potential source of manpower should be fully utilized in various projects, organized into different work brigades and deployed in various projects such as road construction, afforestation programmes, improvement of sanitation (pit latrining, digging and clearing drainages, etc.), water supply projects (digging wells, building small dams) and similar other projects. Through such projects, apart from engaging youth, a certain amount of socialization will be carried out. At least, it would be possible to instill the value of labour in the minds of young people. Itis also possible to educate young people in traditional and social values, as well as making them aware of political situations in their own countries and in the world.

26. The problem of unemployed youth should not be taken lightly. The increasing rate of juvenile delinquency, crime and prostitution can be directly linked to the feeling of frustration that seems to be rampant among the youth. If young people feel neglected by society they are likely to respond through various kinds of anti-social behaviour. Some may do it out of the need for survival, but others might follow suit for the fun of it. In the end, society is the looser. Preventive measures will be more effective, rather than waiting until the young are involved in anti-social and illegal activities and then trying to rehabilitate them back into society.

27. Youth programmes carried out in some African countries are either ad hoc or sectoral. If they have to have an impact they should be planned on a long-term basis. They should also be all inclusive. In some countries such programmes leave out illiterate youth.

28. Countries could learn from each other's experiences through the exchange reports on projects for youth. But, this could more effective if regional seminars and/or workshops are organized for professionals handling the problems of youth so that they can exchange ideas and experiences. On the basis of some successful youth programmes, training programmes can also be organized for thos countries that are yet to start youth programmes or for those where experiences have not been so rewarding. Such seminars, workshops and training programmes can be organized under the aegis of existing regional or sub-regional youth organizations. Countries with relatively successful experience can assist by hosting these programmes.

E. SERVICES FOR THE PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY HANDICAPPED

29. The problem of disability is associated with poor health conditions. Preventive measures to eradicate the causes of various disabling diseases should be the first step in the process of reducing disability.

30. Africa is infested with a variety of disabling diseases. Hence, the first long-tern step should be the eradication of these disabling diseases. Immunization services should be carried out as a matter of routine both in the rural and urban areas. This can also be strengthened by regular medical check-ups for school children and pregnant women. Such services, if not yet instituted, should be made compulsory in all countries, as far as possible, to track down and prevent disabilities.

31. Preventive measures against disabilities should include the improvement of environmental sanitation which is among the causes of various diseases prevalent in Africa. Along with this, the eradication of various vectors that transmit diseases would definitely decrease disabilities.

32. Nutritional deficiencies also contribute to causes of disabilities in Africa. Nutritional deficiency can occur not only because of shortage of food, but also due to lack of knowledge as to what kinds of food to consume and/or how to prepare it. Therefore, attempts to increase food supply should be accompanied by nutritional education of the public. This can include selection of food and its preparation and the balancing of diets.

33. Education of the public through the media, about the causes of disabilities and what could be done to prevent disabilities will contribute to a large extent in minimizing avoidable disabilities. For instance the value of immunization and the protection of children from accidents will definitely minimize disabilities.

34. Though, in the long run, preventive programmes are more effective and lasting, rehabilitation programmes for those already affected is a responsibility African governments should not shy away from. This is a responsibility based not only on humanitarian grounds, but also on the right of the disabled to fully participate in development activities and earn their living on their own rather than depending on others.

35. Rehabilitation programmes should take different forms depending on the extent of disabilities. Those who need medical and orthopedic attention should be provided with them. In this regard, once the disabled person has undergone

medical treatment, there is a need for artificial limbs (at least for some). Therefore, the establishment of a workshop for this purpose should be an important part of any rehabilitation programme. In many cases, psycho-social intervention is required before the disabled are assigned to various occupational rehabilitation programmes.

36. Whereas institutional care by governments or voluntary organizations for the severely handicaped cannot be avoided, it is important that governments should assist and strengthen families to take care of their disabled members. Only when this is not possible should the disabled be moved to institutional care. In some cases, the severely disabled may be assigned to sheltered workshops. Institutional care will not be necessary for all disabled people.

37. After treatment (medical and/or psycho-social) and vocational training, most of the disabled can be deployed in any productive activity along with the able-bodied people. This should be encouraged as much as possible and should be supported by a government policy.

38. The rehabilitation of the physically handicapped requires different kinds or professionally trained people: medical specialist, physco-therapists, occupational therapist, psychologists, social workers, etc. This definitely becomes an expensive undertaking for individual countries. Evolving regional or sub-regional training programmes for the rehabilitation of the handicapped would be cost effective.

39. Though the extent of mental disabilities (of all varieties) in Africa is not clearly known, the existence of the problem cannot be denied. The disease patterns obtaining in African countries do also cause mental retardation as well as physical disabilities. Therefore, the provision of rehabilitation programmes for the mentally handicapped, whatever the causes may be, is essential.

F. THE AGED

40. Another group of people that need the attention of the society are people of old age. Though life expectancy in Africa is very low, with better medical services it is likely to improve. But the same modernization process that is bringing longevity to the aging members of society is undermining their welfare. Urbanization and industrialization are eroding the extended family system where the elderly in Africa had security and commanded respect and authority. Gradually, the elderly are being left to fend for themselves. Fewer members of the extended family system are staying behind to provide daily care and services to the elderly thus calling for an alternative.

41. In the 1980s, it was estimated that the elderly in Africa (over 60 years) were about 4.9% of the total population. With slight improvement in health services and standards of living, the size is likely to increase. Therefore, there will be enough justification for state intervention.

42. The services for the aging population will have to depend on their condition. The following may be some of the alternative ways of looking after the elderly:

(a) Provision of institutional care for the very old and/or infirm. Some of these may have the money but may be too weak to look after themselves. They also need protection from exploitation. Others may not have either the means or the strength to take care of themselves.

(b) Some elderly people may be able to take care of themselves but they are destitutes. Financial assistance may solve their problems.

(c) Some elderly people may be chronically ill and need special attention in institutions.

(d) Wherever possible, the elderly should remain with their families.

43. In the long run, the best way to deal with the problems of the elderly of the second and third type would be institutional care or a comprehensive social security and pension schemes for all sectors of the population. In such a case, the programmes proposed above can be self-financing to some extent. Better methods of ensuring that all people are covered by social security and/or insurance schemes, should be studied at the regional and sub-regional levels. Exchanges of ideas and information may reveal better methods of organizing such services.

G. THE PROBLEM OF REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS

44. Until recently, Africa was known to have the largest refugee population in the world. In June 1984, the global figure was given as "within the limits of three millions" 5/ In terms of cost, UNHCR alone spent over $153 million in 1983 for refugee programmes in Africa.6/ This figure should be added to those of the expenditures incurred by other refugee-serving agencies, to give an idea of the magnitude of the bill.

45. To such an undesirable world record, Africa is now adding another one, as the figure of economic asylum-seekers and of victims of drought and other natural disasters is almost daily increasing. Such an increase is estimated at more than 5.5 million people. 7/

REFUGEES

46. Concerning refugees, they can be divided into four major categories.

(a) "those who have fled the stranglehold of the apartheid regime in South Africa;

(b) those who could be given as the remnants of the struggle against the colonial rule,

(c) those who are the victims of internal strifes and social unrests, and

(d) those who crossed boundaries because of inter-state problems". 8/

47. An in-depth study of the root-causes for asylum-seeking in Africa has been requested by the 19th Summit of the Organization of African Unity 9/, with whose implementation African States should be closely associated, while seriously considering the following:

(a) to learn to tolerate ideological differences among themselves, to resist external influences, and to pursue their political goals in a legitimate and democratic manner;

(b) to transcend tribalism and adhere to genuine national objectives commonly agreed upon, while allowing, accepting or, at least, tolerating dissent;

(c) to enact amnesty laws in an attempt to facilitate voluntary repatriation of refugees, with a firm, open and, if possible, controlable commitment to facilitate the settlement of returnees without harrassment on penalization .

48. Refugee work, at the national level, has some requirements and implications that should be given careful consideration:

(a) Reception centres are usually made available, either through emergency assistance or otherwise. The physical facilities within such centres generally allow the authorities to cope with the flux situations when they occur, with the valuable assistance of UNHCR and other refugee-serving agencies. What needs to be made available is an adequately trained staff, as well as appropriate and clearly defined regulations and instructions for such a staff to deal with the situation in a considerate and humane manner. UNHCR has very recently published a Handbook 10/ which contains comprehensive and valuable information to be used by refugee workers all over the world. Other manuals are also available 11/ that could, as well, contribute to the preparation of national manuals for refugee workers, whose availability would very much facilitate the counselling of refugees, their settlement and many other related problems.

(b) Refugees, although destitute, should not be dealt with as a source of cheap labour, nor should they be considered as a source of foreign exchagge. The main aim of any assistance programme is to bring them, as early as possible, to become self-reliant and, if possible, self-sufficient. Refugees are an asset, hot a liability; their presence should not be used as "Some kind of industry" 12/ to raise assistance with the intention of diverting it to other purposes.

(c) Qualified refugees should be placed, as far as possible and feasible, in suitable jobs within the settlements or in other economic activities conceived for the refugee population, in order to avoid competition for jobs with the local population in countries whose labour market has its limitations, and where job opportunities are often scarce. Income-generating activities for the refugee populations should be launched, as early as possible, through technical assistance from the competent UN bodies and specialized institutions, and with contributions, human, technical and financial from the international community and the NGOs.

(d) Rural refugees should be settled, towards self-reliance or for their integration (if their repatriation is either impossible or unforeseeable), within the framework of agricultural development programmes, agricultural co-operatives, agro-pastoral or agro-industrial endeavours, or the like, until such a time as their acceptance by the local communities would allow absorption and osmosis. Governments should stand ready to envisage, at that stage, naturalization of the rural refugees whose voluntary repatriation to their countries of origin is not possible.

49. With assistance from the international community, and through the expertise of UNHCR and UNDP, governments should be neabled:

(a) to define, quantitatively and qualitatively, the additional burden which refugee presence represents for their economies, and the humanitarian and developmental implications of such burdens;

(b) to conceive and sort out all the projects that the alleviation of such a burden may call for, to prepare the adequate project documents, and to embark on project implementation without undue delays.

50. Towards co-operation in finding durable solutions to refugee problems in Africa, governments should associate themselves with, and benefit from the activities of, a Regional Centre for the Dissemination of Information on Refugee Problems and on Refugee and Humanitarian Laws, to be established in Africa, pursuant to the recommendations of the 1979 Arusha Conference on the situation of Refugees in Africa 13/, and with the assistance and active co-operation of OAU and UNHCR.

II. Displaced persons

51. Besides the refugees, there are asylum-seekers in Africa who, unfortunately for them, are not covered by the existing international or regional instruments, and whose living conditions and possible productive activities tend, therefore, to be entirely ignored. These are:

(a) those who are compelled by poverty or disappointed hopes to expatriate themselves;

(b) those who migrate in search of a job, because the general economic conditions in their own countries have so badly deteriorated that they have remained or become unemployed;

(c) those who cross internationally-recognized boundaries because the persistent drought has decimated all what was sustaining them in their increasingly empoverished environment, and

(d) those victimized by famine or by natural disasters.

52. The economic asylum-seekers, as well as the victims of natural disasters are not considered as refugees, but they deserve, at least, as much attention, sympathy and assistance as the latter ... 14/. Action in favour of displaced persons is generally envisaged at two levels: the emergency one, and the medium- and long-term measures.

53. Upon arrival, and because their conditions are very close, if not similar, to those of the refugees, displaced populations need urgent assistance with respect of food, shelter and health care. This is usually taken care of by the local authorities, with the active assistance and collaboration of the international community, through its cash and kind contributions, and the UN.

competent bodies and voluntary aid-giving agencies. However, emphasis needs to be put here again on the functions, capabilities and staff efficiency of the reception centers (mentioned under para 5.(a) above).

54. Once the emergency needs are provided, interventions at the national level should directly relate to the causes having provoked sudden population movements. Requirements of drought, famine or natural disaster victims are quite distinct and different from those of the economic-asylum seekers. While the latter are looking for employment placement, and are therefore in need of active and efficient counselling and orientation services (if the economic situation of the receiving country allows their acceptance at least on a temporary basis), the former's case is more difficult to tackle, as, on the one hand, the duration of their stay in the receiving countries is undetermined, and, on the other, the solutions to their problems relate to long-term actions whose results or impact will not be promptly perceived.

55, In the case of economic asylum-seekers, approaches to solutions will depend mainly on, and vary according to, the specific conditions prevailing in each country, and, probably also, in the area(s) where the displaced persons have settled. The only common requirement that needs to be given due consideration by the governments, in all the countries, is the availability(as is the case for the refugees) of adequately trained personnel, counsellors, advisers and social workers who have been exposed not only to case study techniques, psychology and demographic studies, but also to the most recent developments in the economic and social conditions of their environment, to the policy decisions relating thereto, to the specific conditions of the labour market ... etc. Such a staff, to maintain its efficiency and perform satisfactorily, would require periodical on-the-job training or cyclical refresher courses.

56. As for the victims of natural disasters, the short-, medium- and long-term actions that need to be taken to contribute, directly or indirectly, to the solutions of their problems have been duly reviewed and defined in the course of two meetings convened recently: the Scientific Round Trable on the Climatic Situation and Drought in Africa (20-23 February 1984), and the Regional Meeting on Natural Disaster Prevention and Preparedness in Africa (24-25 February 1984). The former adopted a Regional plan of action to combat the impacts of drought in Africa 15/ , later endorsed by the ECA Conference of Ministers 16/, while the latter adopted, in its report, a series of recommendations relating to what needs to be done at the internationa, regional and national levels 17/. Needless for the purpose of the present document to repeat, reproduce or even summarize the substance of the aforementioned documents, copies of which should be made available to all concerned for action to be taken at all levels, as and when due.

57. Emphasis should be put, however, on the vital importance for the issues at stake, of the Special Memorandum by the ECA Conference of Ministers on Africa's Economic and Social Crisis 18/, which situates the case of the drought and natural disaster victims, as well as that of economic asylum-seekers, within a global framework that reviews the causes and suggests solutions, including the long-term structural adjustments required. Such a document should, henceforth, guide national action in the field of assistance to displaced populations, as well as in all other humanitarian and developmental endeavours, if the African countries are to extricate themselves from the grips of the crisis obtaining.

58. One important factor that needs to be recorded for this review of operational activities related to refugees and displaced persons to be as comprehensive as possible, is that of information and data accuracy. Assistance from the international community and adequate plannig for short-, medium- and long-term actions, if they are to have any impact, require detailed information backstopped by statistical data of a reliable and precise nature. Action by governments to make this available, as soon as refugee or other asylum situations occur, is a condition *sine qua non* of the success of the rescue, assistance and rehabilitation operations, and also of the longer term actions, be they related to settlement or to repatriation. It should not be forgotten that inaccurate data is always counter productive, to say the least.

H. INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT

59. Although by traditon the development problem listed above fall under the domain of social development, the designing of effective solutions and the implementation thereof require interdisciplinary collaboration. The history of failures in past and present efforts at solving the problems of poverty has to do with what one might call an atomized approach adopted by governments in dealing with problems that are complex and are essentially interrelated. By way of an illustration, it is sufficient to review the main reasons of community development failure to have any significant impact on rural backwardness. The widely accepted arrangement of service delivery in community development was through ministries of community development and, some times also, through ministries of social affairs with departments charged with specific responsibilites for community development. This arrangement did not work out for the following reasons:

(a) Although at the conceptual level, policy makers and planners appreciated the need for interdisciplinary concerted action, excessive differentiation of functions and responsibilities prevented the various agencies involved from pooling intellectual and technical resources for joint planning and joint action,

(b) Each government agency saw its own limited roles as sacrosanct and would, therefore, not allow external infringement upon its domains.

(c) While it was evident that community development was a package of economic, social, and cultural programmes, community development workers were left with the task of raising aspirations without the means of satisfying them. There are certainly other reasons. But the above are the major ones.

60. In looking ahead to the times of planning and implementing, integrated rural development programmes within the context of social development, development planners should benefit from past experiences and avoid the pitfalls thereof.

61. Every sector of development has its social aspects and because of this social development may be viewed as veins and arteries threading through all sectors of human activity. Often ministries of education, health, social affairs, housing, agriculture, industry, etc. are structurally so atomized that they see very little in common in any of their activities. Ministries of social affairs are expected to pick up the wreckage of the other systems as for example, when they are called upon to deal with an adolescent after his educational career has been irretrievably ruined. In rural areas, ministries of social affairs are called upon to feed starving families, put back together familes that are breaking up the economic reasons, restore back to their familes young people running away in search of better opportunities. Effective assistance to such families and persons cannot be seen except within the context of attempts to improve general socio-economic conditions. It may be possible to provide short-term relief. But long-term solutions call for dealing with the causes rather than the symptoms by means of integrated efforts at diagnosis, planning and programme development.

Basic requirements of a workable integrated rural development programme

62. At the minimum, integrated rural development programmes must have the following features.

(a) It must be multidisciplinary in focus and thrust. 19/ The battle must be waged at the social, cultural, organizational and economic fronts. This implies that government agencies with specialized functions must pool resources (material and manpower) together, to understand community problems in their multidimentionality. It is probably practical to start with such a seemingly simple question as "why there is no surplus production of food". Asking this question will force a cause and effect type of enquiry, which leads to the necessity of obtaining data on such factors as: (i) the proportion of total land area suitable for agriculture; (ii) the pattern of the distribution of this land among cultivators, (iii) the social organization of productions, (iv) the technology cultivators use in enhancing the productivity of land and the tools people use to that end; (v) the pattern of the division of labour, (vi) the basis on which people decide what to produce or not to produce; (vii) the probable effect of fiscal policy on decisions to produce or not to produce, (viii) the type of technical assistance available to cultivators, (ix) the modalities of communication extension workers use in communicating new ideas and practices to cultivators, (x) experiences of extension workers concerning challenge and opportunities involved in introducing innovative practices; (xi) the social, cultural and other roots of resistance to innovative practices, (xii) the most likely beneficiaries of increased production, (xiii) marketing facilities; (xiv) the type of consumer goods available in the communities and the extent to which these are valued; (xv) what consumer commodities that are not currently available are likely to have greater demands, (xvi) experience of communities in terms of past and present attempts to enhance the suitability of land for cultivation bymmeans of work to improve the environment (land and water use, conservation efforts) and how such attempts may be made more effective through technical intervention; (xvii) the strengths and weaknesses of past and present technical intervention; (xviii) time use patterns, etc.

(b) Since all these problems cannot be dealt with simultaneously, a multidisciplinary team of experts working with community groups representing the cross section of the communities must identify the most critical elements in the set-up causal factors, and work out strategies and programmes in order of priority to remove the negative effects of these critical factors.

(c) Information and education activities to keep people in rural communities abreast with the social and economic ramifications of the problems identified, the available methods by which they could be dealt with. In doing this development teams should resist the temptation of the mass rally formula. Short but intensive seminars or workshops for smaller groups representing various segments of the community should be organized. Persons given such orientation should be enabled to carry the message to their respective constituencies. This approach is likely to reduce the problem of communication between change agents and ordinary people in rural communities.

(d) (i) Experimental integrated development projects. The suggestions is often made that rural development should be planned and executed within the context of national development. This suggestion frequently leads planners and policy makers to start nation-wide programmes, without spending the time and energy to assess regional specific problems and needs. If programmes should have national characteristics specially at the initial stage, it should be at the phase of problem definition, need determination, assessment of regional/local capacities for participative involvement, understanding the sources of cultural and social resistance to change, determination of the extent of natural resources endowment etc. Such an effort should lead to the drawing up of regional specific profiles.

(ii) Then, on the basis of these profiles, small scale experimental programmes should be undertaken in various geographic locations with a view to determining the vaibility of the integrated package approach from the point of view of efficiency and effectiveness. Localities with similar characteristics as the experimental localities should serve as control localities by staying with the traditional approach of rural development.

(c) Popular Participation: The issue of popular participation is closely linked with the issue of centralization versus decentralization in nation-building efforts. There is no society in Africa today the governments of which do not seek some kind of mass participation in these efforts. This is because governments aspire to the long-range goal of building democratic institutions although there is variation in the methods they employ to achieve such an objective. The methods different governments employ depend, to a large extent, on their evaluation of the capacities of the people for rational participation, and on their evaluation of the danger uncontrolled mass participation poses for the stability of the state.

63. On the basis of these evaluations which, more often than not, exist simultaneously, mass participation is sought through a combination of emotional

factors, manipulation and coercion. The coercion aspect of the strategy emphasizes control, and the need to prescribe the spheres of freedom of action by using locally recruited persons loyal to the system to thwart any efforts that tend to go beyond what is considered safe. Where manipulation strategies are preferred and put to use, needs of the masses are articulated essentially by those who are ill-concerned with the needs of the community, with the result that popular interest is dampened and the probability of attaining goals embodied in development programmes are subverted by subtle non-compliance on the part of the masses. Public officials are often misled by the skin-deep enthusiasm exhibited at village mass rallies - an enthusiasm assidiously whipped by the local leaders to integrate themselves with visiting officials. Superficial adoration of the dignitaries by the masses in public reallies is often mistaken for commitment to the goals espoused by public officials and hence to nation-building. Experience in Africa since the dawn of the independence era have shown this to be an illusion. Instead of stimulating genuine popular participation, the strategies used heretofore succeeded in generating popular resignation and defeatism.

64. But renouncing central manipulation, often referred to as mobilization, in favour of a localized approach of allowing localities to exercise absolute self-determination is not likely to solve the problem either. Given the rather tennous stage of political, economic and social integration of African societies, the notion of unregulated self-determination for the various national/regional constituencies of a given country is likely to lead to segmentation. Nation-building and realistic development cannot take place in segmented societies.

65. But popular participation is a necessary condition for nation-building and development. Aggressive mobilization based on elite conception of what is good for the people has produced alienation, and the option of localized self-determination as a mobilizational principle is likely to lead to further segmentation of society. Then what are the alternatives available to African Governments? Popular participation cannot come about in a climate of suspicion, fear, and general incredulity about the motives of those who have the decision-making powers with respect to development. Efforts at eliciting genuine popular participation are likely to succeed under the following conditions:

(a) A clear statement of objectives, policy and targets relating to integrated rural development with equity, based on priorities established by dialogue, and defined through technical feasibility and economic viability.

(b) Since efforts of development involve a certain degree of sacrifices in terms of differed gratifications, political authorities should demonstrate to the public that such sacrifices are equally distributed among all segments of the population, including the leadership.

(c) An extensive programme of non-formal education disseminating through a network of information systems that are designed to inform and enlighten people about the various dimensions of underdevelopment, their likely causes and the various ways of dealing with these causes. Such information should be given after being validated by actual studies undertaken rather than based on information taken from foreign text-books.

(d) Such information should be given in a dispassionate manner, designed to stimulate discussion and free enquiry;

(e) Mobilization should rely on the establishment of study groups, at comunity level, with every segment of the community represented. Organizational work should resist the temptation of relying too much on vocal elements of the community, and mistake these elements as being necessarily representing natural leadership;

(f) While study groups should be the basis for increasing community awareness about the nature, extent and scope of problems of development in rural areas, a more permanent decision-making structure should be created by linking these groups on a geographic area basis. This should take the form of a citizens' council on rural development with appropriate chapters in similar localities to facilitate upward aggregation of grass-roots needs and demands;

(g) Such councils should be assisted by a multidisciplinary team of sectoral specialists in the various dimensions of development (agriculture, animal science, formal and non-formal education, health, nutrition, cottage and small-scale industry, rural institutions such as cooperatives, specialists in the field of appropriate technology, etc.). The role of this team of technical specialists will be among other things to:

(i) elicit local support and participation in the definition of problems, needs assessment, assessment of local institutional capacities for problem solving;

(ii) interprete national goals and priorities of development in general and social and rural development in particular;

(iii) interprete specific objectives for regional development;

(iv) assist local decision-making bodies in planning strategies and programmes for area and locality development;

(v) provide training opportunities to members of citizens' councils through regional and national seminars and workshops, which among other things will increase the opportunity for council members to exchange ideas and experiences with colleagues from other regions;

(vi) provide technical and supervisiory backstopping for specific projects.

(h) Policies, plans and programmes for integrated rural development should be widely discussed by various representative bodies which should be encouraged to engage in such discussions in an atmosphere of free-enquiry. Experience has shown that governments, use of manipulative techniques to obtain superficial agreements has often resulted in subtle non-compliance, subverting programme goals and objectives at the implementation stage.

66. While the above represent some of the important actions to be taken at the country level, supportive actions are required at subregional/regional levels.

(a) Techanical assistance, at the request of member States, should be provided to formulate policies, plans and strategies for integrated rural development with equity and peoples' participation.

(b) Interdisciplinary technical advisory team should be set-up to evaluate varied approaches of rural development currently in operation in different countries. These approaches should be evaluated from the stand-point of economic efficiency and equity, peoples' participation and replicability.

(c) Organization of subregional seminars to discuss a variety of models of integrated rural development intervention systems.

(d) Continuation of research and publications to facilitate exchange of information relating to various aspects of integrated rural development amongst the member States.

(e) Evolving on exchange programme for rural development practicioners that will increase their knowledge and experience through exposing them to experiences carried out at the national level, within and outside the African region.

(f) Vigorous advocacy of the structural reforms where necessary, and of institution-building, the recognition of the basic premise that man is the author and beneficiary of development of the African region.

I. IMPROVEMENT OF QUALITY OF HUMAN RESOURCES

67. Since the adoption of the Lagos Plan of Action, meetings at expert and ministerial levels, have been organized in Africa to consider all the aspects of human resources planning, development and utilization, and to evolve policies and action programmes as appropriate. While it would be redundant to review the substance of all such activities, it is still relevant to emphasize , the importance of training as a means of improving the quality of manpower. Lack of training or appropriate skills do contribute to unemployment in many developing countries. In order to make training and career development more effective, African countries should consider taking the following measures:

(a) Formulation and implementation of comprehensive training policy guidelines for national training development backed by appropriate legislations.

(b) The establishment or "reconstitution" of administrative machineries to provide policy guidance and to co-ordinate training, guidance and counselling activities.

(c) The development of well-trained and professionally-oriented corps of training staff/development personnel.

(d) Establishing and maintaining a certrally administered training fund derived from the industrial training levy and other forms of financial resource mobilization methods.

(e) Development of appropriate training programmes for out-of-school youth, those engaged in the non-formal sector, subsistance farming, and the handicapped.

(f) Develop appropriate services for psychological/occupational testing for career planning, guidance and counselling.

(g) Develop effective guidance and counselling personnel cadres.

J. BRAIN - DRAIN

68. The problem of brain-drain is now endemic in Africa due to various reasons. Millions of uneducated and educated Africans are living and working abroad, mainly in Europe and North America. It is estimated that some 40, 000 qualified Africans from sub-Saharan Africa are working in Europe alone. 20/ Africa cannot afford, at this stage of its development, to lose the services of its professionals such as engineers, medical doctors, educators, planners, managers, administrators, or even technicians, nurses, or for that matter, any skilled workers.

69. The reasons why these people prefer to live in foreign lands are many and varied. Life at home has not been conducive for many reasons. The political situation in the continent seems to be one of the causes for people prefering to live in other countries rather than their own. Intelectuals are specially suspected by regimes in power to undermining their governments, most often they are the ones that are victimized whenever there are political conflicts. Unless such political harassments at home are minimized, young professionals on study aborad will have second thoughts before returning home.

70. Apart from the political situations, there are a number of factors attracting educated young Africans to stay in Europe, or North America. The dissatisfaction with the conditions of work is forcing young professionals to stay away. This is particularly so with university educators, medical doctors, engineers etc. who find it difficult to utilize fully their professional competence. Universities and hospitals in most countries of Africa are ill-equipped to carry out research properly. At times, narrow educational specializations or foreign-oriented research interests make it impossible for some young professionals to secure appropriate jobs in their own countries. Therefore, better conditions of service abroad including better remuneration and greater freedom of action are some of the reasons for a large number of educated Africans staying away from their own countries.

71. What could be done to bring back nationals that are staying away after completing their training or a tour of duty abroad? There is a great need for promoting activities which would facilitate the return of technically qualified nationals living abroad to their home countries and to the region.

72. In order to attract expatriate nationals back to their home countries and indeed to the region, it is necessary for the governments to institute incentives conducive to attracting back home those with required skills. Some countries are already operating programmes for attracting their nationals back home through various incentives such as house loans, travel facilities, settlement grants, guaranteed employment and other policy measures. These are examples interested countries may consider.

73. Action is also needed at the regional level. A full inventory of the African brain-drain will have to be prepared. Where are most of the educated Africans that are overseas? How many are they? What are the characteristics of their specializations? Why did they choose to stay where they are? A comprehensive study of this phenomenon should be undertaken, based on accurate national case studies. Once such a study is available, the problem should thoroughly discussed by the competent ministerial body, in order to identify the implications of the problem for the human resources development of the continent, and, on the basis of the findings, ways and means of attracting back educated Africans to their respective countries should be worked out.

74. As a measure to counteract the brain-drain, it is important to develop regional and national institutions where nationals would be trained to avoid sending them for training in foreign countries where they risk losing touch with the needs and aspirations of their countries. Available training programmes in African universities can be strengthened and used by countries in the region for training specialists they need. For instance, if one of the Eastern African universities has a strong programme, in management at the masters or doctoral level, there should be no need to duplicate this programme in other universities in the sub-region since countries in the sub-region would be able to send their students to this programme, if prior arrangements are made. The other universities can start specializing in other areas and accept students from other countries. Such allocation of academic activities and exchange of students may be the only way out, at this time, when the cost of education overseas in becoming prohibitive.

75. There is also a need for exchange of skilled manpower among African countries. Such exchange would, no doubt, strengthen the capacity of those countries within the region which lack qualified manpower.

FOOTNOTES

1/ William Brass et. al., The Demography of Tropical Africa, Princeton, Princeton University Press 1973, see particularly Appendex A.

2/ See ILO (PECTA) Orientations et Programme de Travail pour la Periode 1982-1986, Addis Ababa, 1982, p. 11.

3/ United Nations, Africa's strategy for development in the 1970's, United Nations, New York, 1973, p. 15

4/ UN/OAU, Report of the Third Conference of African Ministers of Social Affairs, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 8-10 October 1980, p. 8.

5/ Cf. Statement by the Secretary General a.i. of the OAU on the occasion of OAU Refugee Day - Addis Ababa, 20 June 1984 (Cyclostyled OAU document without reference).

6/ Cf. Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees - Document E/1984/61 of 30 May 1984, submitted to the 1984 Second Regular Session of ECOSOC, page 28, para. 114.

7/ Cf. Progress Report on Emergency and Short-Term Requirements, Addendum to the Report of the Secretary-General on the Critical Social and Economic Situation in Africa - Document E/1984/68/Add.1 of 7 June 1984, submitted to the 1984 Second Regular Session of ECOSOC.

8/ Cf. Adebayo Adedeji, Statement to ICARA II, 10 July 1984, page.2.

9/ Cf. OAU Resolution AHG/Res. 114(XIX), operative paragraph 5.

10/ Cf. UNHCR Handbook for Social Services (Provisional Edition) Geneva, February 1984.

11/ Cf. AACC Refugee service, Handbook for Refugee Workers - First published in 1983

12/ Cf. Introductory note of the Secretary-General a.i. covering the period June 1983 to February 1984, OAU document CM/1233 (XL) Part 1, page 10.

13/ Cf. Recommendation 8, paras 1 and 2, in SIAS bilingual publication entitled The Recommendations from the Arusha Conference on the African Refugee Problem, Uppsala 1981, pp. 18-20.

14/ Cf. Adbayo Adedeji, Statement ..., op.cit., page 3.

15/ Cf. Report of the Scientific Round Table on the Climatic Situation and Drought in Africa. ECA document E/ECA/CM.10/23 of 15 March 1984, Annex.

16/ Cf. ECA Resolution 499 (XIX) of 26 May 1984 on Regional Plan of Action to combat the impacts of drought in Africa.

17/ Cf. Report of the Regional Meeting on Natural Disaster Prevention and Preparedness in Africa, ECA document E/ECA/CM.10/31 of 25 February 1984, p. 13-17.

18/ Cf. ECA document E/ECA/CM.10/37/rev. 1

19/ See United Nations, *Integrated Approach to Rural Development in Africa* New York, 1971, pp. 65-66.

20/ See 4th Plenary Session of the Conference of Vice-Chancellors/Presidents/Rectors of institutions of Higher Learning in Africa, Addis Ababa, 25-29 January 1982, pp. 21-22.